New Republic

OCTOBER 25, 1948

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LABOR BEGINS TO ROLL

see page 10

THE PATTERN OF DEPRESSIONS

By BRUCE BLIVEN

MAX LERNER ON CHARLES A. BEARD

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REMINDER

(Courtesy Mother Nature)

THE TURN of summer into fall is Nature's most poignant reminder of another year gone by.

It's a reminder that should make you think, seriously, that you yourself are a year closer to the autumn of your own particular life.

What steps have you taken . . . what plan do you have . . . for comfort and security in those later years?

You *can* have a very definite plan—one that's automatic and *sure*.

If you're on a payroll, sign up to buy U. S. Savings Bonds on the Payroll Plan, through regular deductions from your wages or salary.

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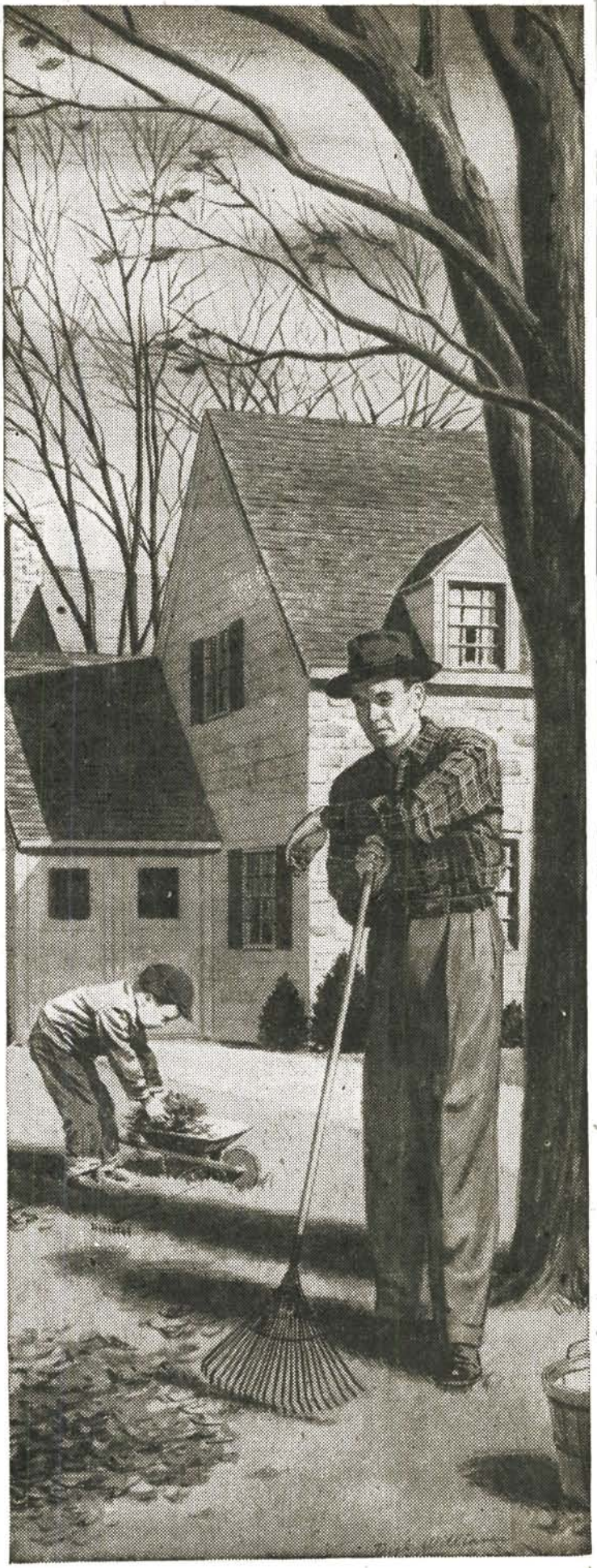

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WASHINGTON WIRE

ON THE DEWEY SPECIAL TRAIN

DEWEY is going to be the next President and you might as well get used to him. The unprepared correspondent switching from the Truman to the Dewey train undergoes a species of shellshock. We made the jump just before Dewey's Pittsburgh speech. That speech contained 12 itemized pledges by the agile Governor, seven of which, so help us, covered the very objectives which we had just been hearing Truman denounce the 80th Congress for its refusal to give him.

With bland audacity Dewey promised to make the Labor Department strong and p o w e r f u l—the Labor Department which his party has just been joyously eviscerating like dogs a rabbit. He pledged himself to extend social-security coverage, to end "soaring prices," to boost the minimum-wage law. The Governor simply didn't give his audience credit for knowing that his GOP cavemen have been fighting all these things in Congress. He didn't say how he would accomplish these worthy measures, just promised them.

One pledge we liked was to settle major industrial disputes "before they become strikes." Hurray, no more strikes. The same speech said flatly there would be no "bust," charged that those who were circulating the "infamous falsehood" were aiding Moscow, and implied, like Hoover, that merely contemplating a depression is pretty unpatriotic.

A man as slick and glib as this, we decided, is worth our attention. Dewey's speech was applauded 30 times in 30 minutes. He can bring applause virtually at will, a trick poor old Harry will never master. His rich, perfectly modulated baritone voice strokes an audience, fondles it, ravishes it. Always there is the toothy smile under the little mustache; at moments of irony the unbelievable dimples and a look of arch and winsome roguishness appear. Since then we have also seen the Uplift look. Here the handsome dark eyes roll for a second, the face grows rapt and the cadence of The Voice slows compellingly as it requests National Unity.

After the Truman train, Dewey's is like a vacation for a newspaperman. Among some of the reporters there is an uncomfortable feeling, however, that something is missing. The Dewey crowds are soon satisfied. They have seen Dewey. "Yes, Ma, he'll be the next President; kinda funny face, hasn't he?—Now let's buy a coke on the way home. Politics are dull, aren't they?"

The national myth that every four years in the excitement of a presidential election the voters get an education in great issues doesn't hold up. Harding and Coolidge wouldn't debate; the great FDR hardly carried on an argument in 1944; and now Dewey is up in the clouds. All over the nation we sense apathy and frustration in this election which even Truman's recent magnificently written speeches—that on Communism at Oklahoma City and on Liberalism at St. Paul—can't dissipate. Amid America's boundless wealth of human material the choice is between a Dewey and a Truman. People feel gypped. Their institutions have betrayed them again.

There is an aura of efficiency and ruthlessness about Dewey as you watch him. The attitude toward Truman is one of contemptuous scorn. Skillfully Dewey raises the Vinson-Marshall incident in every speech while pretending to ignore it on patriotic grounds.

Having said all this, it is our duty to add the impression that Dewey is able, intelligent and efficient, though not necessarily for the same goals we seek. He is surrounded by a group of

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NO MATTER WHO WINS, THIS IS ONLY A BEGINNING

Keep this in mind, as you vote on November 2 —

The election does not knock a nickel off your cost of living, nor solve the housing shortage, nor give Southern youngsters the same educational opportunities as Californians—neither does it restore any dwindling oil reserves, end the peacetime draft, nor dispose of the Berlin crisis or the Atom Bomb. . . . The day after election, readers will still ask,

Where Do We Go from HERE?

While candidates promise—and long after—thousands of mature, unafraid citizens will turn for truth, insight and perspective to *New Republic.*

For a third of a century, *New Republic* has given readers sound reporting on social, economic and political affairs. Do we grind an axe? Yes, one . . . human welfare. Fearlessly *New Republic tackles problems Americans* MUST *solve to make the most of our destiny.*

Now, you will turn first in *New Republic* to POLITICAL news, analysis and forecast.

But what will happen, after the election, to the organizations which *make* the political news—the four leading parties? Are the arch-conservative Dixiecrats here for good? Will the Progressive Party gain strength? Will the moderate-conservative Dewey wing manage to curb the GOP Neanderthalers? Will Truman's "radicalism" set a permanent course for the Democrats and mean an ultimate alliance with labor groups? As your first dip into these waters, make sure you read next week's issue, which features "The Future of the Democratic Party."

Beyond the reporting of developments at home and abroad that will follow the election, *NR* will publish authoritative articles and special forums revaluating the future of the American Democracy. Always look in our pages for the fundamentally liberal approach to significant social and economic issues. Many features appear without *fanfare* because they are as fresh as news that inspires them.

In addition to *features,* read every week the trenchant comment from *New Republic's* Washington Bureau . . . TRB's Washington Wire which a subscriber in Illinois calls *"the best single, all around, continuous job of reporting 'significant' news coming out of Washington"* . . . the exciting paragraphs of exclusive national news gathered by the most extensive reporting system ever organized by a liberal magazine . . . the illuminating departments on books, radio, music, theatre, films.

Continue to see for yourself why a reader in Michigan turns to *NR* for *"clarification of the issues which, if understood only from a newspaper point of view, would be hopelessly confused,"* why a subscriber in New York writes, *"I have been reading* NR *regularly for 20 years. These days it is more wonderful than ever."*

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competent men whose loyalty and devotion do him honor. It is the accepted belief that Dewey is too bright to be a reactionary. By Taber-Knutson standards he is a rather dangerous "liberal."

Dewey's problem is not of getting elected but of getting things done after he is in. Specifically, of dealing with his own tories. Dewey needs "unity" and knows it; it is significant that he has not once assailed (or mentioned) Roosevelt in this campaign. Ostensibly, at any rate, he has accepted the New Deal. He has not mentioned that by name, either, but the unspoken assumption is that he will take it over and administer it better.

The prospect on foreign affairs for Dewey is none too reassuring. He appears to have accepted internationalism for keeps, though he was formerly an isolationist, like John Foster Dulles. But how to get the next steps in international affairs through the very Congress which Dewey's own landslide gives promise of producing?

Things won't wait; Dewey must move fast. Almost immediately after January 20 he has the new budget, with momentous fiscal decisions on foreign affairs: (1) the cost of arms has gone up, and more arms are required; (2) guns as well as butter are now to be sent to Western Europe, which is another big expense; (3) he has pledged large financial aid to China; (4) our national surplus is practically exhausted, thanks to the GOP tax cut.

This presents a profound dilemma. Dewey can't take the US Treasury back at once into the red. The Republicans have just cut taxes, so it would look pretty silly to boost them again. House Republicans already feel ERP aid is too high. And yet every indication in world affairs points to the immediate need of greater financial sacrifices by the American people. As between an obstinate GOP Congress and Dewey in these matters, we suspect our sympathy will be with Dewey. But what will The Voice do? He must act fast. The honeymoon may be short.

T. R. B.

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VOLUME 119, NUMBER 17, ISSUE 1769, NEW YORK CITY, OCTOBER 25, 1948 **New Republic**

THE WEEK

The Truth About the Vinson Mission

THE PRESIDENT of the United States has been caught red-handed trying to bring peace to the world and his enemies are having more fun abusing him for it than a gang of hoodlums pitching eggs at a Wallace rally.

The President's Crime, or Truman's Folly, or the Tragic Blunder—depending upon which newspaper you read—is an instructive example of what can be done with a grave issue and a well-intentioned man during one of our election campaigns. In virtually none of the published accounts or solemn analyses of the now notorious Vinson Incident has anything like the truth emerged. The *New Republic* thinks the record should be set straight:

Since mid-summer the cables from American diplomats and intelligence agents in Europe have been increasingly grave. In July they were bad. In August they were worse. By early September the realization was growing in President Truman that the urgencies of peace were greater than those of the election.

Because the crisis came at the height of the campaign, the President knew that any positive step he took toward its solution might be dismissed as politicking. His hope was that the American people would understand and support him. He knew, however, that this was a calculated risk. Though he is running for election, Truman has not forgotten that he is President.

The genesis of the plan to send a personal emissary to Stalin was not a spur-of-the-moment idea or a last-minute campaign maneuver. The idea grew slowly in long conversations that the President held night after night with some of his closest White House advisers—Clark Clifford, the presidential counsel, David Noyes and Albert Carr, both of the latter recent additions to his staff. Truman shared with them the increasing burden that he felt settling on his shoulders with each new dispatch describing the dangerously low state of American-Russian relations. He felt that he, as President of the United States, must do something to halt the drift toward war even at the risk of being misunderstood and ridiculed.

All of the recent attempts to ease the tension—the negotiations in Moscow, in Berlin and in Paris—had got nowhere, and in fact had only made things worse. The men in the White House feared that unless some fresh approach was made quickly, the UN Assembly session, too, would bog down into an equally hopeless state. After a searching discussion of many ideas they decided that a personal emissary must be sent by the President to Stalin. Chief Justice Vinson was an easy and obvious choice as one of the greatest non-political figures in American public life, a man whose authority is not affected by elections. A Chief Justice can speak for all America and every administration.

The idea was presented by the President to Vinson about the first of October. In the beginning the Chief Justice was reluctant even to consider such a mission, but when the seriousness of the President's intentions became clear and, even more important, when he understood the precise nature of his mission, he agreed to consider it. The precise nature of the mission is what subsequently has been most thoroughly distorted and misrepresented. The fact that Vinson, three days later, accepted the commission can be taken as compelling evidence that President Truman outlined to him a task far above immediate political considerations.

Unfortunately, by this time Secretary of State George Marshall was already in Paris, but the President made his secret plans along lines that he felt certain would be agreeable to Marshall. Vinson's acceptance was enough to set the wheels in motion. Undersecretary Lovett was called in. White House advisers were put to the task of drafting informative cables to be sent to the governments of Britain, France and the USSR. Press Secretary Charles Ross was instructed to arrange radio time for the President to explain Vinson's mission to the people of America and the rest of the world. Later it was to become clear that this was the fatal mistake in an otherwise carefully conceived program.

When President Truman and Undersecretary Lovett went into the communications room for a transatlantic telecon conference with Secretary

Heroism in the Oranges

COMMANDER GEORGE FORD, Roseville-Ampere Memorial Post 9308, Veterans of Foreign Wars, East Orange, New Jersey, knows a hero when he sees one. In behalf of the post, Commander Ford awarded a gold trophy to Patrolman Thomas J. Higgins, of West Orange, for "performance of duty" and said that the Post would make similar awards to "other policemen in the Oranges whose performance in the line of duty is outstanding."

Patrolman Higgins' outstanding performance was breaking up a Progressive Party rally outside a factory because the speaker, James Imbrie, candidate for the United States Senate, had not notified the police of his intention to hold a meeting.

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Marshall, the President radiated the self-confidence of a man who knew he was right. When he emerged he was more than crestfallen. His face bore the look of a man who saw the hope of peace growing ever dimmer. Secretary Marshall had not grasped the precise nature of the mission Truman was proposing. He raised technical objections. He found fundamental fault with what the President, inarticulate as ever, tried to explain to him. And in the end the President, who holds Marshall in an esteem bordering on reverence, gave in. Marshall did not threaten to resign. As he observed to reporters, he does not work that way.

The entire matter might have ended here, a slight incident for historians to uncover years later, if it had not been for the radio negotiations which Press Secretary Ross had started. Ross asked the networks for free time for the President to make a non-political speech. Skeptically they pressed him for details of what use the President was going to make of free time so close to Election Day. Ross felt obliged to tell them.

That was the leak, which grew into a flood of ridicule, abuse and misinterpretation. First to get a tip from radio sources was James Reston of the New York *Times*. The White House prevailed on him, however, not to write anything that would endanger delicate diplomatic negotiations. That was late Tuesday, October 5. On Friday of that week Reston learned that Walter Trohan of the Chicago *Tribune* also had uncovered the story, this time on a tip from Representative Bertrand W. Gearhart (R, Calif.), who had been informed by the State Department. Reston then decided to go ahead with his story, and CBS broadcast it simultaneously.

The first and most constantly reiterated charge was that Harry Truman was motivated by the crassest political aims, that he was trying to win the election by a fluke. The speech that he had written disproves those charges.

Before he talked with Chief Justice Vinson and before he advanced the idea to anyone outside the circle of his intimate advisers, President Truman wrote a 25-minute speech making his motivation clear. In that speech he said that the United States utterly rejects the concept of war as a means of settling international differences. Wars create more problems than they settle. Negotiations between Russia and the Western powers have been greatly hampered by the attitude of distrust which exists between the US and the USSR. The root reason, the President said, is the element in Communist doctrine holding that war between communism and capitalism is inevitable.

Vinson's specific mission, then, would be to ask Stalin personally to reinterpret that doctrine in the light of what we now know about modern war in an atomic age. Acceptance of the request would clear the atmosphere immediately. Instead of bypassing the UN, the President conceived this as the only way of making it possible for the Paris negotiators to have a chance of success. As further assurance that he had no intention of undercutting either the UN or the Big Four Council of Foreign Ministers, the President stated positively that Vinson would not discuss with Stalin any subjects specifically within the jurisdiction of either the UN or the Big Four. He would restrict himself, instead, to his basic thesis. The messages prepared for cabling to Moscow, Paris and London reiterated the point that no undercutting or behind-the-scenes deals were in progress.

This in essence is what the President intended to say in a speech that would have been historic. It can be seen by anyone except his most bitter political detractors that Truman was acting as an honest President striving for a great goal—peace.

PREVIEW OF '52

In the Second Congressional District of Illinois (Chicago), there is a political campaign which may well foreshadow 1952.

Maynard Krueger, best known American Socialist after Norman Thomas, is running for Congress, not as a Socialist but as an independent, against Richard B. Vail, Republican, who is seeking reëlection. There is also a Democratic candidate.

Vail, one of the worst reactionaries in the 80th Congress, voted right only once on 14 important issues charted by the *New Republic*. Krueger is running on a platform much of which will certainly be used if the new non-Communist third party of which Walter Reuther and others are talking ever takes shape. He demands restoration of price and rent controls, repeal of Taft-Hartley, greater power to the UN, extension of civil rights, public housing and economic planning "to stop boom and bust." His campaign is well-planned and expertly operated, and the result he achieves in November should have some interesting lessons for the non-Communist Left.

Suffrage

SAN FRANCISCO (NR correspondent)

IN A SURVEY conducted by the San Francisco League of Women Voters, 67 percent of those questioned did not know the names of congressional candidates from their own districts. Two percent did not know who was running for President. But 100 percent said they were going to get out and vote anyway.

JESSE JONES FINDS A HOME

AUSTIN (NR correspondent)

After 40 years of masquerading as a Democrat, and 14 years of office-holding in a Democratic administration, Jesse Jones has decided to take off the false whiskers. In officially declaring his support for the Republican Party in this election, the mighty Houston financier may be pioneering a new political trail for privileged Southerners. In Texas, under Jones's leadership, the top leaders of big business are following a different course from the one their counterparts are taking in other Southern states. Elsewhere, the well-to-do conservatives are backing the Thurmond-Wright State's Rights Democrats this year, not quite daring a complete break with the traditional one-party system of their fathers.

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But Jesse Jones was never a timid man. And his boldness appears to be catching, even among timid politicians.

The Dixiecrat movement in Texas is a second-rate affair, basically run by small oil. At the start of this year's Southern revolt, a real big shot headed up the anti-Truman forces in Texas: Palmer Bradley of Houston, attorney for Standard Oil of New Jersey and other major corporations. But neither Bradley nor any of the other powerful big businessmen who led the 1944 revolt against Roosevelt in Texas are now publicly identified with this year's Dixiecrat campaign. Even the conservative daily press, which was the mainstay of the Texas "Regulars" in '44, has gone Republican with Jones.

WALLACE WINS FRIENDS

SAN FRANCISCO (NR correspondent)

Unlike those he received in the South, the 350 dozen eggs and the three dozen crates of tomatoes given to Henry Wallace on the West Coast came from admirers. They were the gift of the Sonoma County Progressives for Wallace to pass on to the waterfront strikers.

Wallace in fact received scrupulously correct treatment in California. Officials were careful to see that he got exactly the same size police guard that protected both Truman and Dewey when they were here. The press, even though unanimously opposed to Wallace, gave him good coverage.

The things for which Wallace stands have particular appeal for Californians, especially in relation to public power, irrigation and absentee ownership by big corporations and Eastern banks. Crowds which heard him discuss these issues were responsive.

Wallace spent considerable time with CIO leaders and made a comprehensive tour of the strike-bound waterfront. All in all, his visit seemed to be effective. Some people who had planned to vote for Truman just to keep Dewey out of the White House were convinced that the differences between the two are negligible and therefore they might better cast a ballot for Wallace.

THE EAGLE TAMES THE BEAR

The US airmen who make the Berlin airlift work defy both Russia and the weather, and boast that they make US policy

by Percy Winner

WIESBADEN

You sit well forward in the plexiglass nose of the C-54 Skymaster, in the hinge-seat between the two young airlift pilots who are making their third run of the day from Rhein-Main to Tempelhof. All around you are intricate, delicate, glisteningly expensive gadgets that control the mechanisms of this four-engined triumph of modern science. And a dozen feet behind where you sit is the grossest, the cheapest, the most primitive of cargoes that such a machine-age marvel could carry —sacks of coal.

It's not exactly a joy ride the two pilots and hundreds of others like them are taking for the sake of dirty sacks of coal. You listen through the earphones clamped to your head to the two young men kidding each other over the inter-com; or with them to the blare of hot or sweet music rebroadcast from an OMGUS radio station; but through the plexiglass you see far below you Yak fighters and Ilyushin bombers lined up on Soviet airstrips; and you know that at any moment your pilots may have to use their skill to get out of the way of Soviet planes conducting "maneuvers."

The pilots' nerves are good. They have to be. So do the nerves of all the Americans on the airlift or in Berlin. Take an example that has nothing to do with the risk of limb or life.

After one of those "incidents" by which the Russians in Berlin stick pins into the Americans, Colonel Frank Howley, the military commander of the American sector of the city, sent a dignified protest to his opposite number, Major General Alexander Kotikov, the military commander of the Soviet sector. The Russian reply was typical: not only did Kotikov reject the protest in somewhat less than dignified language: he signed himself, "Military Governor of Berlin," and addressed Howley as "Cavalry Colonel commanding the American garrison in Berlin."

What Howley said in private about the insult isn't on the record. In public neither he nor any other American in authority said anything, on the good principle that sticks and stones might break their bones but names wouldn't hurt them. Why, then, do the Russians resort to such pettiness? If the exchange of letters had been used for propaganda purposes, the insult might conceivably have served a purpose. So far as anyone here knows, this wasn't done.

The explanation of the Russians' conduct—the verbal and aerial stuntings—is that Berlin and its air corridors are the scene of a war of nerves as well as of a cold war. The Russians started this war of nerves by blockading Berlin; the continuing success of the airlift is making them lose it. And they are reduced to the need to kid themselves: they have to act *as if* they had the power to stop the airlift; they have to talk and write *as if* they commanded in Berlin, *as if* the city were theirs by right and the Westerners in it only by their sufferance.

There's a good reason for the Russian petulance. They had been counting on a gradual reduction in efficiency of the airlift. They know now that they were wrong. In the absence of proper maintenance facilities, many of the planes are in bad shape (some being held together by baling wire); hard work under conditions of great strain doesn't help the pilots. Still, statistical averages of number of flights, amounts flown in, etc., are mounting. The Russians had been counting on the bad winter weather to put a crimp in the airlift. That weather is now setting in,

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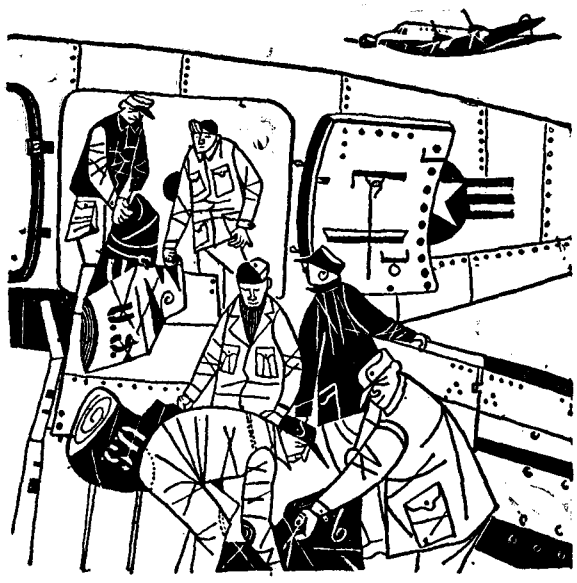
and the Russians realize they had been hoping in vain.

The simple fact is that if we need the airlift all winter, we shall have it all winter. Come storm and sleet and fog; come buzzing and stunting Yaks and Ilyushins; come pinpricks and insults; come anything either nature or the Russians can produce, the United States Air Force in Europe will keep the planes flying into Tempelhof, Gatow and the French field from Rhein-Main, Fassberg and Wiesbaden, the USAFE headquarters. Only shooting war, lifting of the blockade or a change in high-level policy in Washington and London would stop the stream of American C-47 Dakotas, C-54 Skymasters, C-74 Globemasters, British Sunderlands, Yorks, Lancastrians, Haltons, Tudors and Hythes.

Since the start of the airlift, the Americans and British between them have made some 50,000 flights over nearly 20 million miles to carry into Berlin about a quarter of a million metric tons (each 2,204 pounds) of food, coal and other necessary supplies. The amount of food and coal now on hand in Berlin is greater than it was when the Russians clamped down the blockade in June. The daily airlift targets of 3,100 tons for the Americans and 1,400 tons for the RAF are being exceeded regularly. It's true that all this is still being done on an "emergency" basis. The airlift hasn't been able to give Berlin a normal existence. Industrial and commercial activities are below par. In the absence of essential raw materials, factories work on reduced schedules; and unemployment in the Western sectors has mounted from almost nothing to about 100,000.

Nevertheless, the Russian blockade has failed. Berlin can and does live. As an instrument of political pressure, the blockade has been licked by air power, used first as a counter-instrument, then, when it proved its unexpected effectiveness, as an affirmative instrument of policy making. Both winter weather and whatever the Russians can think up now as new deterrents will also be licked. This is what the generals say —Lucius Clay who thought up the airlift idea, Curtis LeMay who made it possible, and William Tunner who runs it. The men in the planes and the ground crews also say it. I have heard them. Flying with them or watching them at work or play, I found no reason to doubt their word.



DRAWING BY JEROME SNYDER

The men participating in the airlift, from the big brass here in Wiesbaden to the lowest echelons sweating out the drab all-night work on the fields, act and talk as if they had a personal stake in the enterprise. Things will be bad when the really nasty weather sets in; there will be a cut of perhaps a third in over-all efficiency; planes will crack up and men may be hurt; but unless I miss my guess, there won't be any morale factor to take into account. So long as the Russians keep up their war of nerves, there will be less griping and grousing from the American airmen than during a comparable wartime operation. The statistics about the technical aspects of the enterprise have tended to blur the drama and excitement, the human drains and rewards, the sheer theatrics.

Most of the men act and sound pleased and proud to play a part in the operation they call Vittles. (The Pentagon calls it Manna, and the British call their show Operation Planefare.) One of the reasons is that the airmen know pretty much what they are doing, and why. Another reason is that a lot of them prefer short-of-war to war. A third is that they feel they are *making* policy. In this connection there is a new formula which you hear stated frequently by middle-echelon men in this charming resort town, once famous as a watering place, now the HQ of General LeMay, who bossed the bombing of Japan, and of General Tunner, who ran the wartime flights of the China-Burma-India theatre over the "hump."

The Air Force, the captains and majors tell you, isn't merely carrying out the policies of the top civilians. The decision to build an airbridge to Berlin was in itself an act of the highest political policy; and Clay made it. The ability to carry out that decision amounted to another act of policy. Thus all of American foreign policy now hinges on a success of the Air Force. If the Air Force fails, American foreign policy will fail. But, the young officers assure you, the Air Force won't fail. We will lead, they say, and the politicians will follow us. Once the existence of the British fleet was a major fact of political policy; the fleet-in-being actually made policy. Now the existence of the USAFE is the cornerstone of American foreign policy, its continuing success depending on the success of the airlift. The US Air Force *makes* policy.

The British airmen want the Russian bear tamed, but stick to their technical methods. They don't take kindly to the screaming about policy matters of the young American eaglets. The RAF men are in this Berlin thing with us, willingly if not eagerly, with determination and courage if not with great optimism, and they don't enjoy talk about any American Century or any American wave of the future. They are concerned with a shorter future and a longer past. British technicians have made a study of Berlin weather for the last hundred years. Their find-

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ings are one of the elements which lead them to the conclusion that winter will cut airlift efficiency by one-third.

But bring what they say to General Clay and he gives a simple answer. Of course, the figures are right, he says, but we will lick both the weather and the figures by planes, more planes and still more planes. If we need one-third more planes, we will get them. If we need still more, we will get still more. The American airmen here in Wiesbaden and at Rhein-Main repeat the formula. We will beat the weather and the Russians as we won during the war —by more and better machines, and by men who know how to use them. January and February will be the worst months, but from now until Christmas a steady increase in the number of planes will permit stockpiling.

Let's look at a few figures. On June 26, the day the airlift was really organized, American Dakotas brought 80 tons into Berlin on 32 flights. A month later there were 288 flights of Skymasters and Dakotas; 1,629 tons were carried. Two months later, the day's total was 2,118 tons, while in September there were several record days with tonnage totals between 5,000 and 6,000. The Dakotas carry three or four tons, the Skymasters between ten and twelve. Usually the American machines make two or three flights daily from Rhein-Main or Wiesbaden. Recently the USAFE has also been using the RAF field at Fassberg in the British zone and flying into Gatow in the British sector of the city. In all, about 2,500 men are working on Operation Vittles, and the British have about as many on Planefare.

Germans are used only in the strictly land-freight accessory aspects of the enterprise. When a plane lands at Tempelhof, for example, a US Air Force truck is at its side in a matter of seconds. Germans help with the unloading and reloading, then carry out the transfer of the cargo to a German truck at a large army dock built at the west side of the huge field. Use of the truck relay system increases speed and efficiency; long lines of German trucks stand day and night beyond the far side of the ramp dock while the field remains clear for arriving and departing planes.

No matter how bad the winter weather will get, especially during January and February, there is little doubt that enough food will be flown in (or stock-piled in advance on good days) to satisfy the minimal daily needs—somewhere between 1,200 and 1,400 tons for the residents of the Western sectors. Coal is another matter, essential raw materials still another. As estimated now, about 400,000 tons of coal will be needed during the winter for electricity, gas, water and sewage disposal, and heating of absolutely essential space. This means heating only "warming centers" of the sort that were created during the hard winter of 1946-47: hospitals, schools, courts, welfare establishments, prisons, public utilities and essential industries, such as food processing, under priority allocations.

The British would like also to bring in at least 700 tons of coal daily for "space heating," that is, to give 340 pounds each for the winter to about 750,000 households. General Clay has not yet agreed to this proposal. The British insist, however, that without the "space heating," children, old people, the sick and invalids would be in danger; and the psychological effect on the whole population would be bad. Berlin is a bitterly cold place with the prevailing winter winds blowing from Russia.

At present an American plane arrives every two and one-half minutes. The total of American and British planes arriving daily is about 720. On a bad winter day, this average would be cut to 380 or less, even with the use of ground control and every scientific device invented during the war and afterward. On fair days the problem is keeping the machines far enough away from one another in the air to avoid collisions. Landing presents no difficulties since the capacity of any of the big runways is 500 machines daily.

Gradually, more and more American planes are being used on the run from Fassberg in the British zone instead of from Wiesbaden and Rhein-Main. The distance is shorter, there are no mountains and a Skymaster can average 26 tons daily instead of 17. Dakotas are being replaced by the Skymasters and the number of the latter is being constantly increased. On the human side, improvements are being made too. In the early days of the airlift, men were transferred here on a few hours' notice from as far away as Japan, the Canal Zone and Hawaii, some of them still in their tropical uniforms. Now, the men coming here have been trained for their jobs.

The most detailed contingency plans have been made for the whole winter. It's unlikely that Globemasters or planes with new devices will be flown in bad weather for fear that they may be forced down in Soviet territory. Provisions have been made to destroy instruments, indeed entire planes, if necessary to keep them out of Russian hands. Airmen here say that in "contact weather"—good visibility—the presence of Russian machines in the air corridors doesn't bother the pilots. In "instrument weather," it might make a difference; but thus far Soviet airmen seem to prefer to stay on the ground in fog and icing conditions. If the Soviet fliers do go up, our pilots will be worried: the assumption is widespread that the Russians aren't equipped to take care of themselves, let alone others, under "instrument conditions."

At best, Berliners won't eat well in mid-winter. The city will be about as badly heated as it was two years ago; at worst, things will be cold indeed.

But the young pilots (despite the press releases) know quite well that in air-ferrying sacks of coal at a cost which makes them worth their weight in gold, they aren't performing a humanitarian mission on behalf of the Berliners. They are testing and strengthening the wings of the American Eagle; and the older men among them (ancients of perhaps 30) look forward happily to the day when the Air Force eagle will really show the civilian politicos where American foreign policy is to go.

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LABOR BEGINS TO ROLL

No matter who wins in November, labor is in politics to stay.

How labor chooses, or is forced by conditions, to function is another matter, one now being debated thoughtfully by labor leaders. But there is no longer any question about the permanency of labor's participation in politics.

The most compelling reason is that Congress has become the only place where labor's needs and wants can find any hope of fulfillment since ours has become primarily a subsidized economy, hedged with rules and restrictions that circumvent the "free play of economic forces" to which the NAM still pays lip-service.

In earlier times, basic economic decisions were made by bankers and manufacturers, the direct masters of labor. Nowadays many important decisions are made in Washington. Financiers, manufacturers, farmers and other groups recognized this development long before it became clear to labor. They met the situation by building strong lobbies to speak for their interests in Washington. Labor has been slow to catch on. That is one reason the 80th Congress was able to pass the Taft-Hartley Act.

That bitterly hated Act was labor's final awakening. Because of its obvious evils, it produced among labor's factions a political unity never before attained.

To be sure, the unity is one of ultimate objective rather than of coordinated action. In the 1948 campaign labor's political action has been as diverse as its organizational structure. Unity of action came about because all branches of labor have, with only slight variations, endorsed the same lists of candidates for Congress.

The touchstone for deciding whether or not to back a candidate was principally his attitude on Taft-Hartley. The AFL used only this criterion. The CIO adopted a somewhat broader standard, considering the candidate's entire record as well as his T-H stand. The result of this unity of objective has been to give labor a combined strength probably exceeding any exerted even in the Roosevelt elections.

Labor probably will have spent close to $2 million directly on this election; but labor's contribution in hours expended in hard organizing activity is still more important, larger by far than in any previous national election. State after state has seen organizational drives result in sharp increases in registration in labor districts.

The election returns will also determine labor's future political program—whether to continue the present diverse political-action organizations, to try to infiltrate the Democratic Party, or to build toward an entirely new third party. These are things which labor leaders are discussing earnestly. There is no pat answer to the problem, no easy one-shot solution. The election returns will help clarify the problem of method, but the basic problem already is clear. From now on, labor must be increasingly active in politics to protect its interests in a society such as ours.

RINGING DOORBELLS WITH PAC

by Claire Neikind

Monday, September 27, 10 A. M.

Joined Henry Murray, New England CIO-PAC Director, at the Bondmore Hotel in Hartford. A stubby young man who chain-smokes cigars and refers frequently to notes on backs of envelopes, leaflets and old bills overflowing from all his pockets. He briefed me quickly on the Connecticut situation.

The big issue here, Murray says, is the election of Chester Bowles as Governor. Labor's help was significant in pushing through his nomination, and since in Connecticut a 5% shift decides Republican or Democratic victory, labor's turnout will decide whether or not Bowles will win.

A low vote in 1946 left Connecticut's liberal Representatives high and dry. Chief job this month is to get 70,000 CIO members registered, later to persuade them to vote for liberals.

7 P.M.

Dinner with UAW organizers for area. They point out their International union deeply concerned over Bowles's election, but struggle between right and left wings for control of Hartford CIO has prevented full attention to this until recently. Left is now defeated

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here, and Bowles campaign is getting full attention. UAW organizers believe his popularity is so great among workers that he might not only get in, but pull Truman ticket in with him, which otherwise would be doubtful.

Murray questions them on registration, which opened last week here. It's slow. They lay plans for this evening's Hartford CIO Council meeting to improve registration within remaining nine days.

8:30 P. M.

CIO Council meeting at headquarters of Royal local on New Park Avenue. Twenty-five officers of member locals present. Chairman Pat Ward, former Colt worker and candidate for reëlection to state senate. Opens meeting by reading letter from national CIO, outlining its position on elections. It urges "intensive campaign on issues of living costs, housing, anti-labor laws, $1 minimum wage, extension of social security." Calls on locals to organize "block workers as foot-soldiers of PAC." Delegates listen with sober concentration. Murray then speaks on urgency of Bowles campaign. "We've talked enough about our political strength . . . this is our chance to put up or shut up. . . ." "How right you are, Brother," someone sings out from the back of the hall. Meeting picks up momentum, delegates pass unanimous resolution pledging "everything humanly possible to elect Bowles," propose ways of providing at least 50 cars to carry registrants to city hall, and a hundred volunteers at PAC headquarters, to canvass by telephone and on foot.

Meeting ends with delegates clustering around Murray. One precinct rally needs a speaker; would he be free? The Negro voters need more attention; can he suggest anything? Something should be done about unionists' wives; what have other areas done about this?

Tuesday, September 28

Up at eight and over to PAC headquarters, in one-story frame building on New Park Avenue. A crew of girls are busy at phones, typed lists in front of them.

Murray first telephones Washington PAC office, to report progress and order 100,000 copies of new leaflet for Hartford area. Then produces from his bulging pockets copies of postcards and leaflets being used in Massachusetts to good effect, consults with Ward on possibility of adapting these to Hartford situation.

Then to Democratic headquarters in Bond Hotel. With Bowles's aides, Murray discusses citywide meeting of shop stewards at which Bowles is to speak on Friday. Selects copies of two Bowles speeches on housing and prices, to send to key CIO stewards all over state. Suggests list of possible speakers for Negro community.

Later, Murray drops in on ADA office on same floor. They tell him of the newly organized "Women for Bowles" committee. One of its members, a Mrs. R—— in New Britain, wants to organize women in housing developments all over state. Will Murray go over and see her? He will.

We entrust our souls to Murray's flivver for a trip to New Haven. It is an old car and drafty, and must be hammered in a certain spot before the starter will work. Murray repeats this performance several times a day. We lunch. Chocolate bar and cup of coffee snatched at gasoline station.

In New Haven we go to CIO headquarters for a talk with Scranton's Ed McCrone, CIO regional director, and Harold Senior, state CIO treasurer. Local unions working independently here, Steel, Amalgamated and Auto carrying out individual campaigns in their shops on registration. Murray points out this involves waste motion.

From there to New London, 50 miles away, for a meeting with AFL leader on Mrs. Chase Going Woodhouse's campaign. This is second most critical in state. Here is a 5%-margin district, with 64 towns and heavy farming vote, mostly Republican. She won in '44, with a 5,000-vote majority, because cities voted. She lost to a smaller Republican vote in '46, because cities didn't vote. With her excellent record in Congress, Mrs. Woodhouse is only Democrat outside of Bowles himself who has joint AFL-CIO support.

AFL reports fairly promising. Big issue here is housing: "We're a very house-conscious people and the special session of the Republican legislature on this question did nothing," the AFL leader says. "And Bowles is going great guns on the housing question." He adds that CIO Textile organizers are doing first-rate job.

Back to Hartford by one a.m. for brief sleep.

Wednesday, September 29

Up at what I am certain was the crack of dawn. Breakfast conference with Stanley Petkas, Textile Workers organizer assigned to full-time PAC work in the state. Textile has put 10 or 12 such men in nation's critical areas, with splendid results. Petkas is rightfully proud. "We have 10,000 textile workers in this state and we've checked every one of them for registration and even some across the state line," he reports. "In Stonington this week I found one shop of 330 workers with 15 unregistered. We registered them, all right.

"We've raised $13,000 for the PAC

DRAWINGS BY NEUWIRTH

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LABOR TURNS TO POLITICS

by Jack Kroll
Director, CIO-PAC

THERE is an unfortunate tendency on the part of some theorists removed from the scene of action to engage in fanciful table-cloth arithmetic when they discuss labor's political action.

They will whip out a pencil and prove to you in a minute that there are 15 million members of trade unions in America, that each of them has, on an average, one close relative whom he can influence, and that therefore there is a solid block of 30 million labor votes if only labor would organize for political action.

Mapped out on the table cloth after a second cup of coffee, it all sounds very simple and indisputable. And in essence it is. What is generally left out of the formula is the fact that the task of organizing labor politically is a huge educational one that cannot be accomplished overnight.

In 1925 there were only about 3,400,000 members of US trade unions. Even by 1935, only 9.4 percent of the wage and salary workers were members of unions, despite the severe economic lash of the Hoover depression. The great change did not come until the next two years, when the CIO undertook to organize the mass-production industries.

In this job the CIO had the benefit, for the first time in history, of protective legislation and a favorable national climate. The organizing was done in a time of rising economic indices, and results could be produced within a matter of weeks. And as organizations grew, the strength of the whole added to the strength of the individual units.

Serious attempts to organize labor politically on a year-round active basis were not started until 1943, when Sidney Hillman, with imagination, energy and courage, launched the CIO-Political Action Committee on its course.

The elections the CIO-PAC is helping to win today—and some spectacular successes have been scored in this year's primaries—are rooted in the work that was begun in 1943 and carried on since then. Boss Crump was beaten at the polls in Tennessee, not this year but in the election campaigns that were fought—and lost—in Tennessee in 1944 and 1946. Organization of labor for political action is essentially an educational process and, like all such processes, takes time.

It is, I think, not an overstatement to say that the greatest spur to the political education of American trade unionists in recent years has been the Taft-Hartley Act.

While its detailed operation may not be fully understood, there is no mistaking its purpose. It is definitely understood and accepted as anti-union legislation and, more important, as a flank attack upon the nation's workers by means of a weapon that they could have had a hand in fashioning—the Congress of the United States.

There are few labor organizations in the country today not fully aware that the Taft-Hartley Act was passed solely because employers were unable to break our unions on the picket line and therefore turned for assistance to the power of government.

The corollary of the argument follows close behind. The American form of government is a democratic one, and employers have no more right to use it for their partisan benefit than they have to use the police force of a city to protect strikebreakers.

In many cities, counties and states, organized labor has operated effectively to elect to local office members of their own organizations or persons friendly to the purposes of organized labor. The direct relationship between an economic struggle and the role of the mayor or the sheriff is easy to visualize. To extend the recognition that economic and political democracy go hand in hand remains the major task of the CIO Political Action Committee. The trend of events may hasten or retard our work, but its direction remains unchanged.

Political action is now firmly established as a major trade-union activity. The training of block workers and political-action workers takes its place with the training of shop stewards and organizers. Political-action plans are as much a part of trade-union functioning as the handling of grievances.

How far this process has already gone will be partly answered by the election returns this November. Already answered is the question whether it will continue. Of that there is no doubt. The work of the PAC will go on.

No other single group in America, perhaps, has as much at stake in the maintenance and extension of democracy as the trade unions. We are the first to suffer in a depression, the first target of reaction.

We feel that the work the CIO is doing in political action is a vital factor in rooting our democracy firmly in a politically educated and alert citizenship. We feel confident that as a result our democracy and well-being as a nation will better be able to withstand the stresses and strains which lie ahead.

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dollar drive, three to four times better than we did in '46. We've even taught the Democratic Party its business. In some cases, while checking our own lists, we found slews of regular Democrats, not workers, unregistered. We turned them over to the Democrats and lit some fires under them. What the hell is the matter with those guys?"

He reports, too, that Textile and other CIO unions were right in the heart of primary politics for the first time in Connecticut labor history in towns like Putman, Killingly, Stonington, Jewett City, Willimantic. "It'll take some doing to put an anti-labor man over on us from now on."

From there to a meeting with Chester Bowles. Murray is curious about the "Businessmen for Bowles" and "Republicans for Bowles" Committees. I am just curious about Bowles himself. He is an immensely impressive man, open, articulate, enthusiastic about CIO-PAC work, earnest about possibilities of a lasting liberal-labor coalition. He said: "If we can prove that labor, with liberal, progressive candidates, can really *produce* the vote, then we will have the formula for a truly liberal Democratic Party machinery."

From Hartford to New Britain, where Murray picks up names of workers who are still unregistered, and turns over a list of names for a housing campaign. Then we leave for New Haven.

In New Haven CIO Council meeting is weaker than Hartford. Plans for car pools, telephone brigades, shopgate meetings are proposed.

Back to Hartford at unmentionable hour.

Thursday, September 30

Off early for Providence, Rhode Island, Murray having arranged to return to Connecticut the following week to lay plans for vote-getting after registration is completed.

In Providence, a conference with Frank Benti and Antonio Di Pinto, president and secretary, respectively, of the Rhode Island CIO, makes it clear this state is a model for CIO-PAC action. It has the highest per-capita organized labor membership in the country, and there isn't a political leader here who doesn't know it. Labor political action began to get results in '44. Since then Rhode Island has been one of the most consistent pro-labor states in the nation.

Governor Pastore was only Governor publicly to condemn Taft-Hartley Act. State Assembly only one to memorialize Congress against it. Senator McGrath willing to filibuster against it. The two Representatives, Aime Forand and John Fogarty, have 100-percent voting records by NR charts. "Those fellows weren't *born* good," says Benti with a wink.

There's no doubt which way this state will go in November, or who will make it go that way. "They don't need me here," Murray says. "I just come by to get a shot in the arm."

1 P. M.

We leave Providence and head for Massachusetts, where organized labor is fighting for its life. On our way to Fall River, Murray explains the situation. There are three anti-labor referenda coming up, one of which makes it a criminal offense to sign a contract containing *any* form of union security, from union shop to maintenance of membership. The three together practically legislate unions out of existence.

As we drive into Fall River, we see a soundtruck on the main street, with an enormous "Register Now" sign and a loud horn blaring. At the City Hall, long double lines of would-be voters wait patiently, stretching from the third to the first floor and out into the street. This is a textile town, and we head for the Textile Workers office. We meet Dolores Marconi, educational director, flushed with excitement and finding it hard to sit calmly in her chair.

She tells us Fall River has already broken all registration records and there is still another day to go. This was accomplished after monumental job done of checking registration lists of 52,000 against police lists of 81,000 residents, and checking the balance against CIO membership. In this case, PAC went after *all* working-class unregistered voters, whether CIO members or not. They sent 40,000 postcards, went doorbell pushing, organized block workers, and have already shoved up registration from 52,000 to 59,000, and expect at least 1,000 more. "Our campaign is the talk of the town," Dolores says happily.

Her hopeful vigor is infectious; we are tempted to stay and address envelopes ourselves. "Need any help?" asks Murray. "No, it's under control," Dolores thanks him, and we leave for Boston.

6:30 P. M.

We reach the Hub toward evening, the flivver groaning in every joint. Dinner with Bill Belanger, regional Textile director, and Cyril O'Brien, state PAC

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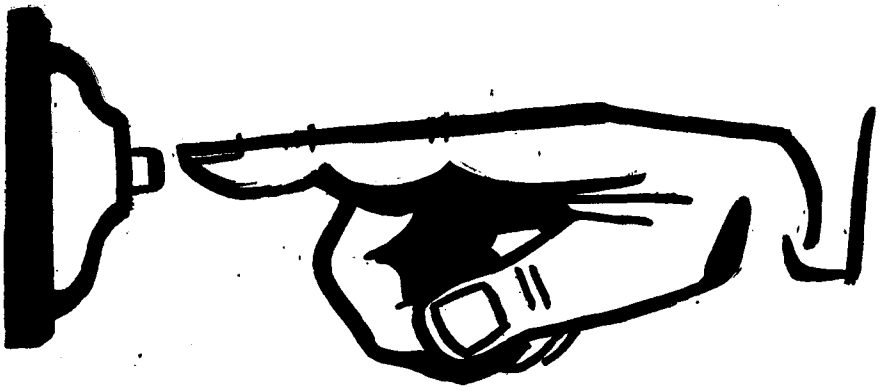


organizer. Belanger, a French American who radiates competence, is wildly elated. Registration in Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Cambridge and almost every other industrial center is breaking all records. With a half-million organized workers in the state, and the AFL and CIO united for the first time in Massachusetts history, he is sure the anti-labor bills will be licked.

We listen to the United Labor Committee's radio program, which goes over 12 major Massachusetts stations every night. Made with first-rate volunteer labor from the American Federation of Radio Artists, the "Ballots and Ballads" programs sound really professional.

Belanger tells us of the pioneering political job being done. "This is big-league stuff," he says. Key labor leaders are learning the a, b, c's of political ward organization, breaking down registration lists, organizing ward and precinct captains, building permanent organization.

Friday, October 1

Visit AFL Bakers' Union office to hear more recordings. Then to United Labor's registration headquarters on Beacon Street. Too early for working crew, but scattered beer cans, cigarette butts and papers indicate the presence of lots of people the night before. Walls here plastered, as they were in Hartford, with voters' lists, and chairs covered with city directories used in mailing out material.

From there to ADA headquarters, where Reginald Zalles tells us of ward organization. "It would never have been possible without this coalition of labor and liberal forces," he says. "Since last summer, we organized all 22 wards in Boston. Incidentally this has involved a basic reorientation of labor, away from shops and to the neighborhoods. What we're getting now is a working political machinery for the labor-liberal alliance. It's changing the face of the state."

The alliance has averaged 100 to 150 volunteers a night during registration week, some from labor, some veterans, mostly AVC members, some from ADA.

In the afternoon we visit one of the aides of Democratic candidate for Governor, Paul Dever. Three telephones on his desk ring constantly, workers popping in and out, general air of jubilation pervades loft headquarters. "In the bag, in the bag? Nothing's in the bag until November 2," he says nervously. I learn later he always says everything nervously. "But it looks good, it looks good. Labor's doing OK," he tells Murray, "but you fellows better realize there's many a slip between a registered voter and a voter."

Dinner with Belanger and AFL state chief Ernest Johnson. There is still some wariness between them. . . . AFL and CIO here never political bedfellows before, but every sign of excellent coöperation and mutual admiration. They discuss next stage in campaign—deeper education on referenda and intensive efforts to get workers to polls.

Late that evening back to registration headquarters, where ward captains telephone in results of day's work, some fifteen volunteers address envelopes. Joy and fatigue complete. It's been a tough week, but even better than they'd expected.

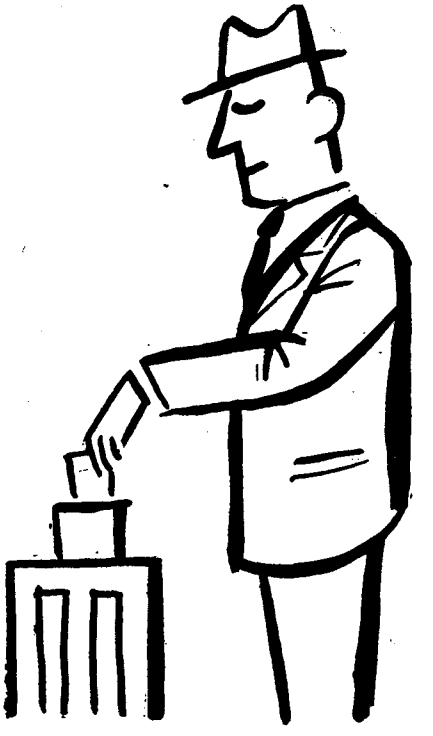
Saturday, October 2

To Worcester, where AFL-CIO cooperation was late in starting but now is rolling. We learn that of the 20,000 unregistered voters, 10,000 have been picked up this week. Recent meeting of 600 shop stewards, roaring with enthusiasm, started action, and everyone confident of success. Point out in Roosevelt year, 1940, there were 100,000 registered. Now there are 107,000, and more to come. "We can't miss," the CIO man tells us. Expects that drive will not only vote down anti-labor bills, but will carry Democratic gubernatorial candidate Dever and local congressional candidate Donahue.

Back to Boston, where Murray goes into huddle over Springfield situation, which contains delicate problems.

At last on my way back to New York, I compare the labor picture in New England as I knew it in 1944, and the picture I've seen this week. In 1944 the work was sporadic, superficial, resting on Roosevelt. The work now is mature, self-reliant; labor is digging in for a long siege.

There were no signs then of a permanent political organization in labor's ranks; now there are many signs. Labor may neither defeat Dewey nor reform the Democratic Party this year. But, brothers, it's coming along!



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NEELY IN WEST VIRGINIA

This is the fifth in a special series on critical battles of the 1948 campaign. If New Republic readers wish to help Matthew M. Neely's campaign, contributions may be sent to Robert Mollohan, care of M. N. Neely, Fairmont, West Virginia.

—THE EDITORS

SILVER-HAIRED, persuasive Matthew M. Neely has a good chance of returning next session to his old seat as Democratic Senator from West Virginia. Neely is a Bible-quoting old-timer in state and national politics who won the Democratic nomination in a rough-and-tumble primary last May. Now, in his fight against the Republican incumbent, Chapman Revercomb, he has the advantage of a 200,000 majority of Democratic registrations over the Republican. In addition, he has been endorsed by all branches of labor including the state's 130,000 soft-coal miners.

GETZ

An unprecedented situation that has arisen within Republican ranks gives him a better than even chance. Senator Revercomb is co-author of the Displaced Persons Act passed by the 80th Congress. Even Dewey has branded this measure as "discriminating" against both Catholics and Jews. Thus, the national GOP leadership is on the spot. It cannot openly support Revercomb without fear of alienating big blocs of Catholic and Jewish votes throughout the country.

Despite piteous pleas from Revercomb, Dewey has refused to come to West Virginia to aid his campaign. Dewey's running mate, Earl Warren, did come, but the treatment accorded Revercomb probably did him more harm than good. Though Revercomb was allowed on Warren's train, his name was mentioned in only one of Warren's six speeches. And the closest that Warren came to an endorsement was to ask for the election of "a Republican Senator."

This was in sharp contrast with the warm treatment President Truman gave Neely. He grabbed Neely's arm before a crowd of 15,000 in Huntington and said, "If you don't elect this fellow, you don't know which side your bread's buttered on, I'll tell you that." Neely responded with an equally warm endorsement of Truman and predicted that the two of them would sweep West Virginia by a majority of at least 100,000 votes.

Neely has every right to the endorsement of liberal Democrats. His congressional career began in 1912 when he went into the House at the same session in which Alben W. Barkley first went to Congress. He served continuously until 1921, and two years later was elected to the Senate, where he served until 1940 with only a two-year hiatus. Throughout the Roosevelt Administration he was a strong supporter of the New Deal and became conspicuous in his fight for Southern coal-freight parity with Northern shippers.

In 1940 he ran for Governor and swept to an easy victory. His inauguration in January of 1941 was a colorful ceremony witnessed by many former Senate colleagues and a personal representative of President Roosevelt. The program enunciated in his inaugural address included safeguards for collective-bargaining rights, increased benefits for the blind and needy aged, elimination of the sales tax on basic foodstuffs, and better salaries for teachers.

Most of the program was enacted into law except for the State Labor Relations Act which a rebellious House of Delegates refused to approve. He did manage, however, to get through a "Little Hatch Act" to abolish coercive practices in elections and a law for permanent registration of voters.

While Neely was still Governor, he decided to run again for the Senate, a campaign in which he was opposed, as now, by Revercomb. Though Revercomb won, his victory cannot be relied upon as an indication of the relative esteem in which the two are held by West Virginia voters. Neely had been performing some political gymnastics and a large body of labor supporters felt that he should finish his job as Governor. Moreover, Revercomb had not endeared himself to West Virginia labor during his term. In fact, he voted for the Taft-Hartley Act, which Neely violently opposes.

Revercomb's Taft-Hartley stand was enough to finish him with a great body of West Virginia voters, but there was plenty more against him in his record. He voted to cut ECA funds, against the extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, against funds for the TVA steam plant, and against the anti-inflation amendment. He voted in favor of exempting railroads from anti-trust laws, in favor of restricting social security and of an income-tax cut.

In the face of such a record, there was no question about labor endorsing Revercomb's opponent. The state CIO, AFL and United Mine Workers have all come out in strong support of Neely, and various other groups have added their endorsement.

Although he is 73 and a veteran of the Spanish American War, Neely is an active and formidable campaigner. He has particular appeal for the "little man" who in West Virginia is traditionally independent and politically conscious. Throughout his career he has always had the common touch. During the past summer and this fall, he toured the state, visiting nearly every town and village, even in the most remote mountain sections. West Virginians are glad to see him back in the political fray because they know he is fighting on the right side.

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WHEN THE CRASH COMES

Thirty previous depressions in our history should have taught us to heed today's danger signals —but they haven't

by Bruce Bliven

Is a new depression coming? A number of people who are in a good position to judge think the answer is yes.

Preston Delano, Controller of the Currency, said the other day in his annual report that "inflation threatens an economic disaster of the first magnitude," and called this "as serious a question as we have ever faced."

Marriner Eccles, of the Federal Reserve Board, thinks it is now too late to prevent a crash.

"This country is certainly going to have a bust," he said recently, testifying before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee. He thought a mitigating factor would be a balanced budget, and a few days later President Truman warned of an unbalanced budget during the coming year.

The President himself has played the role of Cassandra several times of late, on the advice, of course, of his Council of Economic Advisers.

"We must act to end this economic dislocation," said the President on Labor Day. "We must curb inflation before it leads us to economic disaster."

It is somewhat surprising that more attention is not paid to these prophecies of trouble—surprising when you remember that:

This country has experienced more than 30 depressions in its 160 years of independent history.

Every one of them has come when nearly all conditions *were strikingly similar to what we have now.*

Every one has come, that is, when there is general prosperity, high prices, full employment, and an almost universal feeling of confidence.

Nearly always, depression starts with little or no warning, predicted by very few, and those predictions generally disregarded.

The length of the total prosperity-depression cycle from one crest to the next is on the average only about four years. Of this total, expansion accounts for about 26 months, and contraction, 22. Real prosperity has been enjoyed heretofore only 40 percent of the time. Full-blown depression accounts for 37 percent, and 23 percent of the time we are going in or coming out.

It is impossible to find any long-range correlation between depression and Republican or Democratic control of the federal government.

For a case history of a depression, we might look at 1837. Things were booming at the beginning of that year. The country had gone crazy over the possibilities of railroads and canals, and huge investments had been made in such enterprises. A land boom was on, with farms and city real estate changing hands again and again at ever higher prices. New banks were opened practically overnight, in town after town.

Then, almost in a day, the bottom fell out of everything. The banks which had mushroomed withered with equal speed. Hundreds of solid old business firms closed their doors. The surplus in the federal treasury turned into a deficit. Many thousands of workingmen lost their jobs and homes, and were turned out into the streets, under the cold ethics of the day, to live as best they could on the charity of neighbors who were almost as hard hit as themselves. It would be six years before prosperity again attained high tide, although conditions improved somewhat in 1838-39.

Thirty-six years later the troubles of '37 (and some others in the interim) had been forgotten, and the country was booming again. The end of the Civil War and the opening of the West had caused everybody to feel that the nation was now (to use a phrase which was not to become popular until 60 years later), on a "plateau of prosperity." Railroads were again being built everywhere, not only here, but in Western Europe, Russia and South America. There was worldwide speculation and overexpansion, even more marked in Austria and Germany than in the United States.

But as in 1837, the picture again changed in a day. In the early autumn of 1873, a group of big firms in Eastern cities collapsed in quick succession, the worst failure being that of the financial house of Jay Cooke and Company on September 18. The stock exchanges were closed for ten days; President Grant hurried to New York to take personal charge in the hour of peril. But his presence was unavailing: this depression, also, lasted nearly six years. Wages were cut and cut again in spite of strikes among Pennsylvania coal miners, New England textile operators and railroad workers. Millions of people went hungry.

About a hundred years earlier, the new-born nation had begun to be plagued by the gyrations of the business cycle. There was a bad one which began in 1784 and lasted five years. Another started in 1807 and lasted until 1810. The War of 1812 was followed by serious hard times lasting from 1815 to 1821, and milder difficulties from 1825 to 1829. As already reported, the depression of 1837 was soon followed by another which lasted until 1843.

The grave one of 1857 was briefer, ending about a year later, and the same thing was true of the one that immediately followed the Civil War, beginning late in 1865. The hard times which lasted from 1873 until 1879 were followed by a two-year recession from 1883-85, and a briefer one from 1890 to 1891. That of 1893 continued into 1897, with an interlude of mild prosperity in 1895.

The "rich man's panic," which lasted only a few months, began in 1903. In 1907 the banks got into trouble briefly. The depression of 1913

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ended about two years later with the assistance of contracts to supply munitions to participants in the First World War. The sharp break in prices in 1920 lasted until January 5, 1922, and was followed by minor slacking in 1924 and in 1927.

The depression which began in July, 1929 (not October, as many people suppose), reached its low point in March, 1933. By 1936, business had recovered substantially, but another downward turn began in May, 1937. Like the depression of 1913, this one was canceled by the prosperity (if it can be so described) of war business, beginning about the middle of 1940.

Many efforts have been made to show that depression in one country has been the cause of depressions elsewhere, and in some cases, such a correlation seems clear. In many others, however, it does not. If you make a chart of business cycles in 20 or 30 countries over a period of a hundred years (Dr. Wesley Clair Mitchell, of Columbia University, has done so), the relationship between one country and another is highly irregular. On the average, the business cycle in other industrialized countries *seems to be about one-third longer* than in the United States.

What causes a depression? The number of people who think they know is exceeded only by the number who have an infallible cure for colds. In the New York Public Library the cards which list books on this subject make a pile two feet high, the majority being tomes offering somebody's panacea. But if anybody has found a magic solution, obviously it has not been applied, for depressions continue to strike. Economic historians claim that they have occurred only since the rise of a fairly complicated monetary and credit system; but their proof is rather sketchy. Russian Communists say that the system which prevails in their country makes them immune to periodic crises, to which defenders of "free enterprise" reply that Russia's low standard of living and shortage of consumer goods of all kinds are equivalent to what would be called chronic depression in other countries.

Postwar monetary inflation, such as we are now experiencing in the United States, is primarily due to the relative abundance of money (currency and credit) and scarcity of goods. Such inflation, it should be noted, is entirely different from the runaway depreciation of a currency like that in China today, or in Germany in the early 1920's, which is essentially a vote of no confidence in the government.

To help curb a too great supply of money and credit, we have just reinstituted some restrictions on instalment buying, and have begun—very gently indeed—to use the machinery of the Federal Reserve System to raise the interest rates on bank loans, and thus make money somewhat dearer. But most of our depressions came before there was any Federal Reserve System, and before instalment buying was at all important. Government financial policy can help along an inflation or deflation, but the policies now employed cannot turn one into the other. The phenomenon of the business cycle goes deeper.

There are several main types of economic thinking about the causes of these cycles. The socialist analysis, in its simplest form, says that repeated depressions come because the workers do not get in the form of wages a sufficient part of the value of their product to buy it. According to this analysis, mass-produced consumer goods can only be bought on a mass market; if investors take too large a share of the value of the national product, they try to turn it into additional productive machinery for which there is at the moment no use. According to this theory, high wages, high taxes on large incomes and low business profits

CULVER SERVICE

FRANK BELLEW: PANIC SWEEPING OUT WALL STREET (CIRCA 1873-1876)

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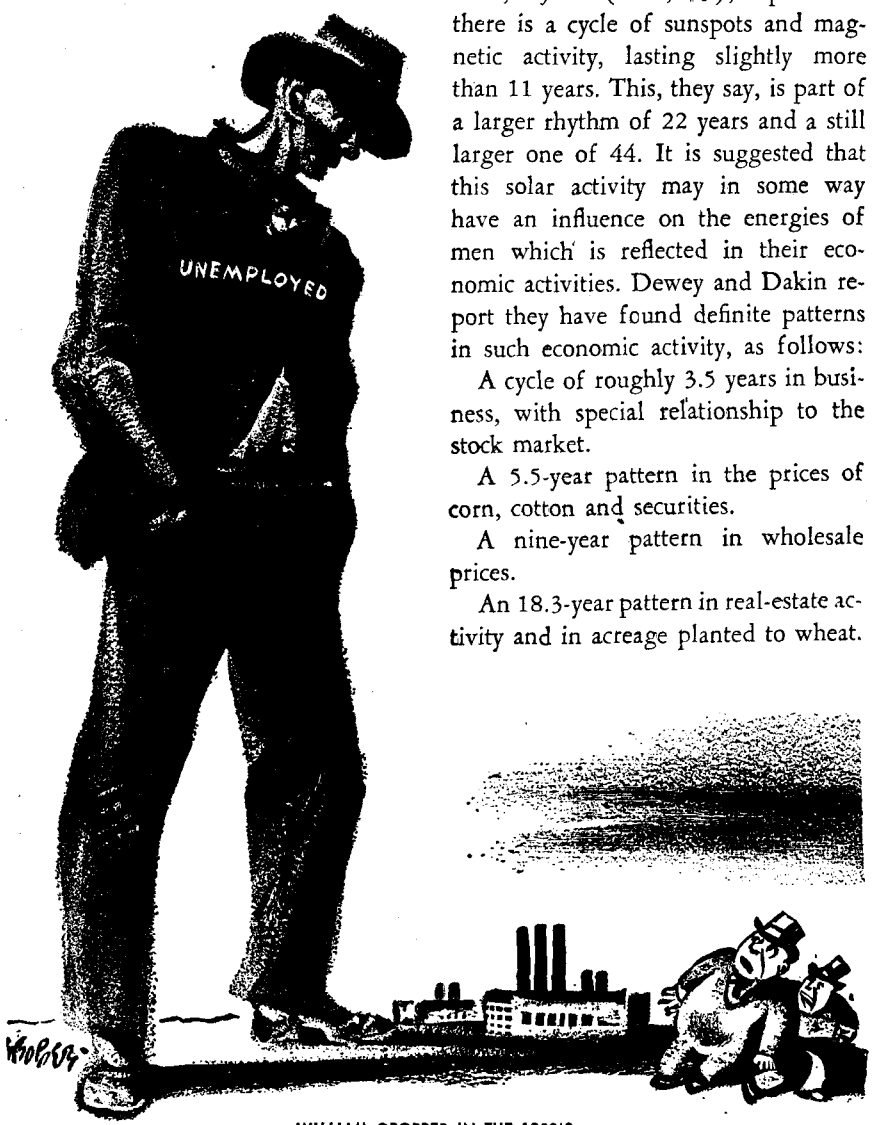
may postpone a depression or lessen its severity, though they cannot prevent its coming.

One orthodox non-socialist explanation says that depressions are in their essence psychological. When times are good, businessmen overestimate their duration. They build too many factories and produce too much merchandise. Since good times usually are marked by an inflation of the currency, people have a tendency to buy freely for fear prices will go still higher.

Then, when the crest of the wave has been reached, something happens to alarm the business community. Plans for further expansion are canceled. All at once, the public gets the idea that prices, instead of continuing to mount, are going down, and they postpone everything postponable.



WILLIAM GROPPER IN THE 1930'S

The public having slowed up its buying, retailers are left with unsold goods on their shelves, and they pass this predicament back through wholesalers to manufacturers. All down the line, workers are laid off, which means that they buy less than ever. The freeze continues until by sheer necessity the surplus goods have been disposed of, sometimes at ruinous reductions.

There is a third explanation of the business cycle which has had much recent attention. It is that industrial and financial activity, as well as many other aspects of human affairs, are controlled by cycles that differ in duration, and that a general depression occurs when several of them reach their low point at the same time. Dakin and Dewey, authors of the recent popular book, *Cycles* (Holt, $3), report that there is a cycle of sunspots and magnetic activity, lasting slightly more than 11 years. This, they say, is part of a larger rhythm of 22 years and a still larger one of 44. It is suggested that this solar activity may in some way have an influence on the energies of men which is reflected in their economic activities. Dewey and Dakin report they have found definite patterns in such economic activity, as follows:

A cycle of roughly 3.5 years in business, with special relationship to the stock market.

A 5.5-year pattern in the prices of corn, cotton and securities.

A nine-year pattern in wholesale prices.

An 18.3-year pattern in real-estate activity and in acreage planted to wheat.

A 54-year cycle in the trend of wheat prices and also in business affairs in general.

Several of these cycles will simultaneously reach their lowest points in 1951 and 1952.

The political liberals who, in the days of Roosevelt, called themselves New Dealers, perhaps did not know what causes depressions, but they felt pretty sure that they knew what measures should be taken to lessen their impact. In general, this school believes in high wages to bolster consumer demand, and high taxes to prevent oversaving by business. High taxes will also put large funds into the hands of the government for use in emergency activities once a depression has made its appearance.

These activities center around the Keynesian theory of pump priming. In simplified form, this theory says that when a depression begins, businessmen are reluctant to spend for the production of goods which they fear cannot be sold, or for increase in capital investment—for more machinery and factories, for example—which may prove unnecessary. Therefore they draw in their horns, causing more unemployment and decreased business activity, at the very moment when expansion is what the national economy needs. The Keynesian theory says that government spending can be used to fill the gap. Every dollar spent by the government for materials or wages in such a situation is passed along from person to person until it augments consumer income by $3 or $4. These expenditures should be slacked off when business begins to turn up again.

It is not generally known that in the United States, Herbert Hoover, a man who certainly cannot be accused of radicalism, was one of the first to recommend the application of at least part of the Keynes formula. He proposed that public works should be held in abeyance during good times, but put into execution when times began to worsen.

The Keynes plan was adopted to some degree by the Roosevelt Administration during the great depression

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of the thirties, after President Roosevelt had found that decreasing the gold value of the dollar did not push prices up as some of his advisers had told him that it would. His efforts to stabilize the economy and provide employment through public works of many types were bitterly criticized both from the Right and the Left.

The conservatives, many of whom evidently did not understand what he was trying to do, protested against this use of public money in what seemed to them a reckless fashion, at a time when their own incomes were greatly reduced and they found meeting their taxes more difficult than ever. Others, more sophisticated, believed that there is no "artificial" cure for depression and wanted to let it run its course.

The Roosevelt policy was criticized from the Left on the ground that it was never operated on a large enough scale, or with enough consistency, to do the economic job that was intended. These critics pointed out that when pump priming was suspended in 1937, because things had temporarily got better, a new depression promptly followed. They argued that the expenditure of only a few billions on government works after 1932 coincided with an increase in the national income from about $40 billion to about $80 billion, and suggested that if a little more money had been spent, the increase would have been correspondingly greater.

The most intelligent spokesman for the quasi-conservative business point of view is probably the Committee for Economic Development, a research organization supported by numerous more enlightened leaders of the business community. Its position was well-summarized in testimony before a joint congressional committee by Paul Hoffman before he became head of the European Recovery Program.

The CED does not seem very clear as to why the swings of the business cycle occur. It merely says that a boom comes when people try to spend beyond their current income by using up their savings or by borrowing, and that a depression starts when they try to decrease their expenditures in order to accumulate more cash or to pay off debts, and especially bank debts. Why these mass insanities should recur at tolerably regular intervals, the CED omits to mention. It does, however, have a program for economic stability, which can be paraphrased as follows:

1. Postpone public works in good times and put them into operation in bad (the Hoover-Keynes idea).

2. Keep taxes at a reasonable level and try to maintain about the same level in good times and bad. This level should be just high enough to raise funds which will balance the budget, assuming prosperity and a high level of employment. (The father of this idea is Beardsley Ruml of R. H. Macy.) In times of prosperity, these taxes will syphon off excess funds which would otherwise have an inflationary tendency; in hard times, they will provide a low volume of tax dollars, giving the government some money for public works but producing in general an anti-deflationary effect.

3. The government must check monopoly, encourage invention and create a climate favorable to risk-taking by business.

4. Mass purchasing power must be kept up by eradicating seasonal unemployment and by use of unemployment insurance.

5. Businessmen must increase their sales efforts as hard times begin. They should set their prices on a long-term basis, not taking advantage of temporary scarcity for unduly large profits. All elements in the community must be kept in balance.

6. Efforts should be made to keep the budget balanced and to reduce government expenditures.

7. Businessmen should not make risky loans during booms or try to call good loans during depressions. They should beware of reckless overexpansion during inflationary periods.

8. Foreign trade should be encouraged and restrictions on it reduced.

All this is a far cry from the attitude of right-wing businessmen. Rarely do they put their philosophy into words, but if they did, it would be something like this:

Depressions are natural phenomena like thunderstorms. Little or nothing can be done to prevent one; when it comes, you just let nature take its course. When wages have gone low enough, some point is finally reached at which it pays to resume production.

The CED program, of course, coincides to some degree with that of the New Deal progressives. The latter group also favor elimination of seasonal unemployment, preferably through an annual wage. They want high consumer purchasing power, to be obtained through collective bargaining by strong unions. They would keep prices down, by government action if necessary, in order to avoid excessive profits which in turn produce oversaving by business. They want a very large extension of social services supported through federal taxation, including great expenditures for socialized medicine, schools, projects like the TVA, and so on.

I have mentioned the ways in which today's situation parallels that of more than 30 earlier depressions. There are also some differences. One of these is a fairly widespread recognition—at least by some—that a depression may be coming. This feeling has probably helped to keep the stock market lower than would otherwise have been the case, and lower, proportionately, than in many pre-depression periods in the past.

Another factor is the policy reflected in ERP, which results in large exports as gifts or loans, even before the domestic pipelines of supply have been filled.

Third, and most important of all, is the resumption of preparation for war, which is an inflationary factor of tremendous influence. War preparations are capable of masking the swings of the business cycle to an amazing degree. For the short term, you can have war or depression but not both. In the long run, of course, war and depression go together, common symptoms of the fact that human beings have not yet demonstrated they have brains enough to manage their collective affairs.

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CHARLES BEARD'S STORMY VOYAGE

An appreciation of the revolution in historical tradition brought about by a great satirical craftsman—with a recitation of the factors that later impelled him to deny his own greatness

by Max Lerner

CHARLES A. BEARD died, as he lived, in the thick of an intellectual storm occasioned by his books. His last two works were rather weird affairs, which accused President Roosevelt of starting World War II and being responsible for Pearl Harbor, and they have brought the liberal brickbats down on him. His early books, some thirty-five years ago, portrayed the Founding Fathers as framing the Constitution in the image of their own economic advantage, and for years Beard was an antichrist to the tories. Here obviously was a man of violent contrasts and explosive energies.

I think Beard tussled with demons most of his life—demons within himself but also within the twisted coils of American doctrine and passion. It is hard to be a good novelist, or a good critic, or a good social commentator and theorist when you are torn in every direction by the storm of American life. It is just as hard to be a good historian, for the supposedly dead past refuses to bury its dead, and the historian finds the choice between ghosts as turbulent as that between the living.

Beard lived an outwardly quiet life—a decade (1910-17) as professor of politics at Columbia, the last thirty years dairying and writing on a Connecticut farm. He became the sage of New Milford, as Voltaire had once been the sage of Ferney, and he had a good deal of the Frenchman's antiseptic, deflationist turn of mind. Yet Beard paid a heavy price of intellectual isolation for his later independence of academic or group or party ties. He was not caught up, as Voltaire was, in giving marching orders to a whole new era of man's thought, and he was not part of as cohesive a band as the French *philosophes*. In much of his latter-day thinking he was refighting ancient feuds and licking old wounds.

If he were alive he would read this with scorn, as he scorned so many judgments that he thought doctrinal. He regarded most of the winds of doctrine as merely windy, yet he was himself swept by more of them than he recognized. Indiana-born and Indiana-educated, he never came wholly to accept the intellectuals of the Eastern seaboard and they never wholly accepted him. Like that of his fellow Indianian, Theodore Dreiser, much of his career became a rebellion against the smugly held idealisms and pretensions of the American tradition. He applied to history a good deal of the savage naturalistic scrutiny that Dreiser applied to business and love and morals.

He was a great historian—one of the greatest we have had in the field of American history—mainly because he was more than a historian. He was a political theorist, and a dabbler in philosophy. But his real stature as historian came from his being a satirist; that is what gives strength, bite and pungency to his work. I had suspected this from my memory of individual books, but in reviewing his work as a whole the impression becomes cumulative and overwhelming. The satirist, from Juvenal to Thorstein Veblen, is a stripper. He strips away the veneer to show the grain, strips off the garments to show the body, tears off the mask to show the face. Beard was dedicated to stripping away the moralizing and the rhetoric in the history of ideas and of American social and political movements, and laying bare the operative realities however unlovely they might seem to moralistic eyes and rhetorical ears. This it was which gave his writing that combination of ironic detachment and impassioned caring that only a satirist achieves.

He wrote in the field of American history, but in any area Beard's great themes would have dealt with this gap between rhetoric and logic, and the problem of appearance and reality. He was always on the watch for whatever had not been stipulated in the bond, or "in the premises," as he used to say in a mocking imitation of legal language. Since American history had been viewed by most writers as the achievement of noble-minded patriots, he delighted to show that it had actually been shaped largely by the clash of economic interests, and that the noble-minded patriots cared as much about their pocketbooks as any others. In the field where the clashes seemed mainly between rival statesmen, parties and sections, he delighted to show that the real struggles were between economic groups and classes; and that out of these struggles came parties, platforms and wars. Even wars, Beard showed (witness not only the War of Independence, but also that of 1812 and the Civil War), were not in essence wars: one was the thrust of an agricultural imperialism, the other a revolution.

Thus things were never what they seemed, and the skimmed milk of struggle and greed often masqueraded

This is the first of Max Lerner's two articles on Charles A. Beard.

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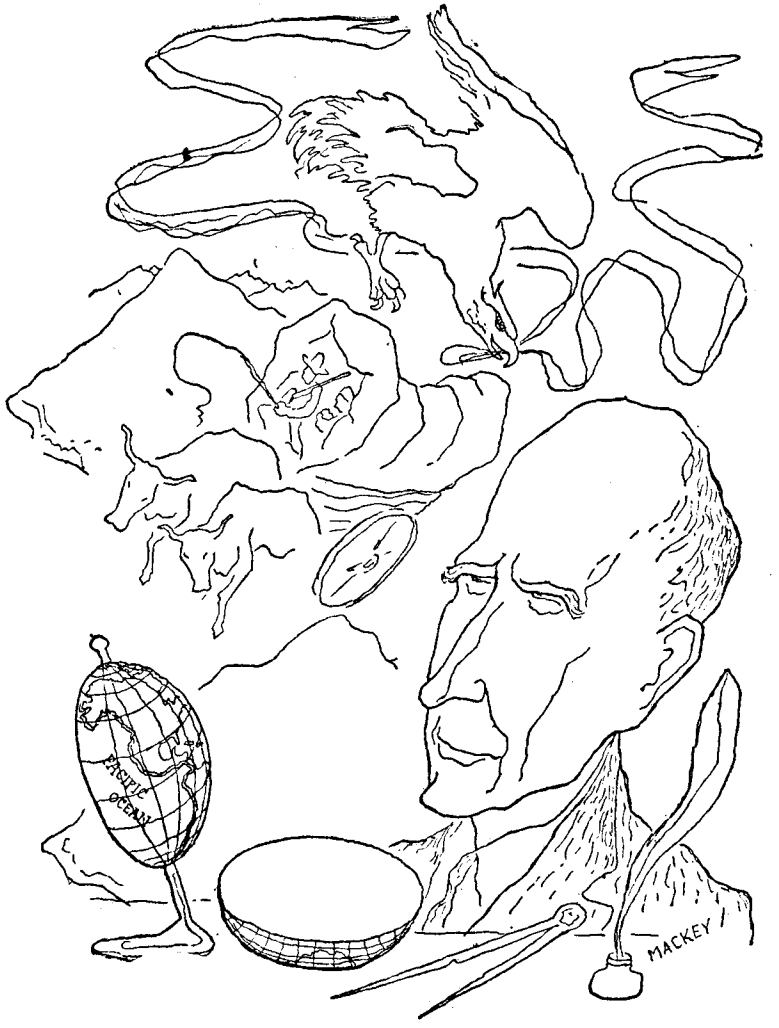
as the cream of moral unction. And thus also the famous Beardian "economic interpretation," which for a while caused so great a pother, is seen as only a sub-category of Beard's much broader categories of appearance and reality. This was true, of course, of the much greater satirical mind with whom Beard did not like to be associated—Karl Marx. The Marxian method of stripping "ideologies" bare to reveal class interest and class struggle, was also part of an effort to turn appearances topsy-turvy.

But where Marx was anchored to a revolutionary strategy, Beard had no anchorage, and in the stormy voyage of his writing life there are bewildering twists and turns—even on the crucial question of economic interpretation. In the end, Beard allowed his feud with FDR and the internationalists to blunt the edge of his detachment and upset his perspective as a historian, and thus deprive him of much of his satiric power. His last books had the nagging note of a tory journalist accusing the liberal politicians of hypocrisy because of the gap between their speeches and platforms and their behavior in the stress of the foreign-policy battle. The feudist and moralist had swallowed up the realist.

For most American radicals Beard's great phase was his first. It included *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution* (1913) and its companion volume, *Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy* (1915). In this phase, Beard roared like a young lion in his Columbia classroom; in it his Jeffersonian and Populist convictions emerged most clearly in writing and teaching; in it he was belabored by the New York *Times* editorialists as a menace to American institutions, and himself carried on an epic feud with President Butler of Columbia; in it he was attacked with concentrated fury by bar and bench, by the rich laity and its servile clergy; in it he wrote ardent interventionist articles against the German tyranny, yet when several anti-war professors were fired by Columbia, Beard resigned in scathing protest. In this period Beard fought for teachers' tenure, argued for a teachers' union. No wonder all the Socialists and radicals quoted Beard, and —despite his scorn for Marxism— adored him.



Beard later claimed he was misunderstood by both Right and Left. No doubt he was: every thinker is. His actual thesis in the two books was stated with great concreteness—that the men who framed the Constitution and led the fight for its ratification were the men of property, who had not only a group interest but direct personal financial motives in getting a strong government which would protect their "personality" holdings against economic collapse and democratic assault; that roughly the same group of men formed the Federalist Party, ran the new government, put through the funding measures, redeemed the (often speculatively acquired) government securities at face value, and protected the shipping and manufacturing interests. He held that the land-and-farmer interests and the propertyless men, who had fought ratification, were the men who formed the core of Jeffersonian democracy and its party. This was the thesis, and Beard drove it home with spikes of documentation.

I have had (see my earlier *New Republic* article on Beard, May 10, 1939) a minor quarrel with the way he handled his thesis. I think he proved more than he had to. A more subtle economic theory of history would stress not the personal economic motives (where do you ever get them that naked?) but the class and group interests which create the powerful psychological stereotypes that are the real compulsion. Writing about a single historical episode, the framing and ratification of the Constitution,

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Beard found himself using a theory of human action which would have to be modified when he came to deal with the longer sweep of history and the dynamic of social change. In *Jeffersonian Democracy*, he handled this broader theme more flexibly, and his studies of the political ideas of John Adams and of John Taylor are as integral to the analysis as his chapter on "Security-Holding and Politics."

Thus in what is in effect a single two-volume work, using as an instrument of analysis a "theory of economic determinism" which, as he put it, "has not been tried out in American history" and therefore "until it is tried out . . . cannot be found wanting," Beard drove a hard economic logic through the flabby traditional rhetoric on the founding of the American Republic, and through the economic and diplomatic policies and the party battles of the first generation of the Republic. This work gave a clear intellectual clue to the forces at work in American history, and did it so well that it stayed done. No one has been able to undo it.

Not even Beard himself. For it was a sad fact that instead of leaving his early work to speak for itself, Beard kept whittling its meaning down, and explaining and reëxplaining it until he all but explained it away. He was, of course, right in saying he had borrowed far more from Madison, and even from conservatives like Marshall and Webster, than from Marxism. I am talking not of what he said about his intellectual sources, but what he said about his main intent. He insisted he had only meant to "redress the balance" as against the pietistic historians; that his economic determinism was not a considered and rounded view, not "the" interpretation but "an" interpretation—a highly necessary scholarly finger-exercise; and finally that he had meant only to bring the economic emphasis back, and prove how impossible it was to leave economic pressures out of history. It is difficult to take seriously Beard's protestations that he had not meant his books seriously. Despite his efforts to purge himself, and extirpate the Old Bolshevik in himself, the early books and their thesis stand out as part of the great heritage of American realistic thought.

Yet one cannot help feeling that Beard was never wholly at home in the field of economic determinism. As a historian-craftsman, using the economic emphasis as one of the tools of his craft (as he did in the *Rise*), he was superb. As a philosopher of history, seeking to give explicitly the theoretical meaning of the tool, he was often fuzzy. This is true even of his best theoretical book, *The Economic Basis of Politics* (lectures given at Amherst in 1916, published in 1922, with an added chapter in 1945). In it he restates Madison's thesis (in the famous No. 10 "Federalist Paper") that parties and party struggles are based on "the various and unequal distribution of property." He makes this, now a theory of economic status underlying political representation (as in the French Estates), now a theory of economic pressure groups, as in the American Congress; at one point he flirts with the then current "pluralistic" theory that the economic associations are as important as the state, and even with the idea of group representation in Parliament.

Obviously Beard was groping. Starting with a theory of direct economic motives he reconsidered it and formulated a looser theory of economic property interests as the basis of politics. He then reconsidered it again, and broadened it into a still looser theory of industrial skills and technology as the basis of political conflict. Grappling with the problems of the continued political cleavage in Russia after the Revolution, he tried to explain it by saying that "a great society, whether capitalistic or communist, must possess different kinds and grades of skill and talent"; that even a revolutionary government "must assume all the complex and staggering burdens of management and exchange"; and that "as efficient production depends to a great extent upon skill, skill itself is a form of property even if property in capital is abolished." But this effort to assimilate the commissar to the capitalist, and crowd the Leninist factional struggles into Madison's formula of unequal property distribution as the basis for faction, was scarcely successful. Beard had moved over from property to technology, from wealth to state-trust management, from the cash dividend to the social dividend. Only in a chapter added to the book in 1945 did he show signs of understanding that new explanations had to be found for power struggles under dictatorship.

I have traced these successive shifts not in a carping spirit, but to show that—with all his wide reading, his academic training, his sharp mind—Beard floundered about as a theorist. I suspect it was because he depended too much on Madison's core insight, which had been undeveloped; and on his own vague sense that the key for unlocking history and politics must be found somehow in economics, but that you must avoid Marx's error and flee a "system" like the very Devil. In his efforts to avoid a system he also avoided a theory. The result was not hard to predict. In 1936 Beard wrote a book, *The Discussion of Human Affairs*, to prove that history was all terribly complex, and no factor could be omitted. It took him almost a quarter-century, but he managed to move from a theory of economic determinism all the way over to the easy and amorphous theory of "multiple causation."

To turn from this into the pages of *The Rise of American Civilization* is to move from murkiness into the clear light of a crisp day. A writer, if he is lucky, will manage to tackle his biggest theme when he is at the fullness of his creative powers. Beard's big theme was the whole history of American civilization, from the first colonial settlements to the flush times of the 1920's. He wrote the two volumes in collaboration with his wife, Mary Ritter Beard; when they appeared in 1927 he was fifty-three.

Freed from academic ties, he wrote with sweep, with a bold, superb structure, without heavy documentation,

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without a footnote or a bibliographical item. His earlier books had been attacked but not read; these volumes were bought, read, and acclaimed widely. And no wonder. People sensed that this was no dry-as-dust historian who retailed only what Ph. D.'s thought about history, but a man of craggy purposes who was attempting a history of grand proportions in an age of piddling writers and complacent thinkers. But they also sensed that he was not just a "popular" or "literary" historian as Bancroft or John Fiske had been. He wrote well, to be sure; there were flashing phrases, and the sentences—even the cumbersome and majestic ones—had a cutting edge. But they assumed that the reader was a mature person, that he could be trusted not to flinch from the realities of economic power struggles, that he did not have to be shielded from the facts of life. The *Rise* clinched Beard's position as the leader of the "new history" school of economic emphasis and cultural sweep.

I think it is fair to say that Beard's *Rise* permeated downward and outward; it affected professional historians, students, laymen; it left its imprint on a whole generation. The orthodox might rage that this heathen had been permitted to penetrate into the arcana of the historical temple, but the fact was that Beard was no longer an outsider, and some of his former heresies (diluted, of course) were close to establishing new orthodoxies. He had been away from Columbia for a decade, but he was accepted by the middle-of-the-road liberals as well as the radicals as the history teacher of the nation. The book did much to pave the way for the acceptance of the New Deal when the civilization whose rise the Beards had celebrated showed signs of weakening in the Great Depression.

What the underlying ideas and themes were of Beard's greatest book, and how the Beard of the *Rise* could turn into the Beard of the foreign-policy books: these are the questions I want to tackle next week in my concluding article on the stormy historian of a stormy American civilization.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

THE THREE WHITMANS

THE COMPLETE POETRY AND PROSE OF WALT WHITMAN, with an Introduction by Malcolm Cowley (Pellegrini and Cudahy; 2 vols.; $8.50).

SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH in 1892 Walt Whitman arranged and reprinted in two volumes what he wished to be known henceforth as his *Complete Poetry and Prose*. Since then many editions of *Leaves of Grass* have been published—complete, incomplete, de luxe, and in cheap pocket books. His *Complete Prose Works*, however, has for many years been out of print. Both the poetry and the prose, as the poet left them in his final or "Deathbed Edition," have now been handsomely republished by Pellegrini and Cudahy, with an introduction by Malcolm Cowley.

The edition does not pretend to be a scholar's text, with bibliographical and critical notes (though there is need for such an edition), but a reprinting of American classics for the general reader. The reviewer, therefore, after expressing his pleasure in seeing Whitman's prose once more in print, is mainly interested in Cowley's essay.

And this essay is one of the most challenging interpretations of Walt Whitman as man and poet that has been published in English. I say English because certain European critics have been equally frank, though not as well-informed. Most of Whitman's contemporaries thought him prurient and sadly lacking in taste and manners, but before his death the poet and his friends had succeeded in creating the legend of a Christlike poet-prophet, the very incarnation of American democratic idealism. Somewhere behind the bearded prophet there lived a real man, but as time went on the man got more and more lost in the clouds of myth.

Several years ago, Henry Seidel Canby, in his biography, took one step toward the separation of the man and the myth by pointing out that the "I" of *Leaves of Grass* expresses two Whitmans, the "real" Whitman and the "symbolical" Whitman. Cowley finds not two but three Whitmans. The first of these is the shy, awkward, indolent journalist with the mediocre intellect known to his associates until about 1850 and to his family afterwards. The second is the poet as he envisioned himself (Canby's "symbolical" Whitman), a *persona* in the psychology of Jung. The third is the poet who wrote "Song of Myself" and "all the poety that gave 'Leaves of Grass' its position in world literature"; this poet "fell forever silent after 1874," though the *persona* lived on until 1892.

All three of these Whitmans were "real" in the sense that they existed, but Cowley is attracted only by the third. In fact, he so dislikes the personality (or personalities) of the man that one wonders whether he completely understands Whitman. At any rate, knowledge has not brought sympathy and tolerance. The critic ignores the poet's moral and spiritual struggle; he sees only the psychological struggle.

It must be confessed, however, that the personality which Cowley uncovers (and his evidence is difficult to attack) is not very attractive, especially to a typical American, who looks with aversion upon sexual abnormality. Cowley is certainly not the first to decide that Walt Whitman was homosexual, but he has followed through the implications more relentlessly than any other critic except Eduard Bertz in Germany. Others have suspected that Whitman's own discovery of his anomalous emotions made him a literary genius, that his poetic expression flowed from the hydraulic pressure of shame, loneliness and sexual frustration. But most of these critics have believed that the poet "sublimated" his eroticism in his hospital

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activities during the war and in his *Drum Taps* poems.

Cowley rejects the sublimation theory. Whitman, he thinks, never "cured" himself, though he did "readjust" himself to society. Yet as he became adjusted, his imaginative power and lyric vigor declined. Before this successful readjustment, he descended into the depths of humanity, as many other major writers in world literature have done before and since. Like Dostoevsky, their descent into the underworld has often given them "a double sense, of their isolation first and then of their brotherhood or identity with all the outcasts and diseased and rejected of the earth. Later they emerge into sunlight, but for a long time they walk the streets as if in disguise and continue to feel that they belong with the secret people of the caves—among whom they number, as time goes on, more and more of humanity."

In his introduction, Cowley does not attempt to write biography, not even a "biographical sketch." But henceforth no biographer of Whitman can ignore the poet's emotional isolation, the social degradation that he experienced by intimate association, or the inner hell out of which came the great poems of the 1850's and the all-embracing vicarious sympathy. The biographer will also need to explore the poet's family life and his social environment more thoroughly than anyone has yet done. Cowley, unable to do this in a single essay, has provided several pertinent hints.

Finally, the biographer will follow Whitman into the poise and serenity that he attained in old age, despite poverty, disease and neglect. During these years he published *Specimen Days,* and I wish Cowley had found time and space for more comment on this book (he says only that Whitman's prose account of the war is superior to *Drum Taps*), because it is the most interesting part of the second volume of this new edition. The sections of *Specimen Days* devoted to accounts of Whitman's hospital experiences contain some of the most authentic reporting on record of the human cost of the Civil War, and in the nature notes written by the semi-paralytic we find a personality grown sweet and mellow through pain and defeat. But since the editor dislikes Whitman's personality, perhaps he cannot sympathize with the old man even in his Indian summer.

Cowley's intention is merely to separate "the pines from the poplars, the lasting values from what is trivial or sententious or weedy." Since he is one of the outstanding literary critics in America today, his contribution to a reëvaluation of Whitman's poetry should have far-reaching effects.

GAY WILSON ALLEN

HOPEFUL HOPELESSNESS

THE SKY IS RED, by Giuseppe Berto (New Directions; $3.50).

WE HAVE ALL READ of a new Italian renaissance in art and letters. Returning visitors tell alternate tales of unbelievable misery, confusion, rottenness and a strange stirring and vibrancy as if some new energy were germinating from out of the decay. The Italian movies are soft, dejected, full of a pain and despair that hardly raise their voices. Yet they strike us as with a powerful ray of life-giving force.

All this tallies with the impression one gets on reading Giuseppe Berto's *The Sky Is Red*, a best-selling novel in Italy which now appears in an excellent translation.

I know nothing of Giuseppe Berto except that he was an officer in the recent war and for three years a prisoner in a camp in Texas. The publisher gives us no further information. Perhaps this peculiar reticence—almost anonymity—with which Berto's first novel is presented to the American reader makes its generic quality all the more striking.

The Sky Is Red is the story of Italy's "lost generation": the kids who are growing up now in a shattered country where the majority of people have "no object in life but finding food so as not to die." The four central characters are two boys of seventeen and sixteen, and their two girl friends aged fourteen and fifteen. They are children and grown-ups at the same time: their experiences are wholly relevant to the adult world.

The older boy, Tullio, is a prototype of the dispossessed worker whose basic will to live and sense of justice make him a Red, quite apart from political knowledge or slogans. He is killed in a holdup of an army truck. Daniele, the younger boy whom Tullio befriends, is the uprooted child of a middle-class family. Orphaned by an air raid, he gains strength and achieves a certain manhood through his companionship with Tullio and the others, but in the end he falls victim to despair and he kills himself. Of the two girls, Giulia, the younger and purer, dies of tuberculosis, and Carla, the prostitute, remains alone in the erstwhile brothel within the bombed-out area which is the common home of all four characters throughout most of the story. ". . . They had been left alone to bear the burden of defeat, a burden too great for an impoverished people, in a land disabled and devastated by war. Nor was it possible to foresee when the burden of defeat would be lightened. Perhaps this would not come about during the period of a man's lifetime; and so all these men who were living and thinking now could not be happy again in their lives. . . ."

A bitter and even hopeless tale? The hope is in the writing, in the fact that it was written at all, in the resolute confrontation of tragedy. The hope is in its tenderness, its eloquence through quiet, its warmth without bathos. Its sentiment is simply truth unashamed. It has a reality that stands out clearly in the glow of a steady, subdued light. The novelist's mind functions, but there is no dry intellectualizing; he is not terrified of tears, but there is no maudlin wavering. There is objectivity, but no fake hardness. There is in it a sense of human completeness. Entirely of our day, *The Sky Is Red* exemplifies the great tradition of classic Italian art.

HAROLD CLURMAN

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SUCCESS STORY

CATALINA, by W. Somerset Maugham (Doubleday and Company; $3).

SOMERSET MAUGHAM has made it perfectly clear that he no longer wants to be taken seriously. His healthy impatience with all "highbrow" criticism betrays his embarrassment and his wish to be left alone to mine the Book Clubs. If forced to save face, he querulously reiterates his old half-truth that the good novelist is just a story-teller; for those who will accept it, there is the implication that anyone who can tell a rattling good tale of the comic-strip variety is as good a novelist as we have a right to expect.

In his last two books, this mock-modest intention is best served by the "historical" novel (or "romance"). Renaissance Italy or (in the present instance) "Spain during the Inquisition" provides an amoral (*i. e.*, Latin) background; the cliché characters are modeled on the movie people destined to fill the roles; motive and action are accounted for in such peremptory asides as, "She loved him with all the hot passion of her young body."

While he is treating the period, Maugham has also resurrected such ancient attractions as grisly autos-da-fé and monastic imprisonments of the sort that haunted the deliriums of Elsie Dinsmore. "There are scourges under the bed" with the necessary consequence of "open and suppurating sores." A suave bishop invokes sure-fire indignation by explaining that he sacrifices the heretic's body only to gain his soul. But "even saints retain some small measure of humanity," and in a strange reversal at the end of the book he decides he was wrong—that is to say, the heretic was right. (I have an impression that this is supposed to conciliate a large Catholic audience! The frequent shifts of tone to placate all the buyers is the only fun of the book.) The heroine, "breathless with lust for the male," refuses a monastic vocation, and escapes her convent at midnight to join her lover. ("What he said . . . was so coarse that a decorous writer cannot but leave it to the reader's imagination.")

Catalina is worth notice because in it Maugham has finally written his religious novel. In serial fiction and motion pictures, piety has become a drawing card, "simple faith" has removed many scenario complications, and the spiritual life operates through wonders known to the trade as "miracles." This book sets the record for miracles in current entertainment. To begin with, Catalina, the crippled heroine, receives, in a vision from the Blessed Virgin, instructions for a cure. Later, a prominent cleric receives "the signal honor of levitation." Then the church bells begin ringing of themselves. The cure is effected, and finally, at Catalina's wedding, the Blessed Virgin offers to stand witness, accepts an olive at the wedding feast, and "delicately nibbled it with white teeth."

This cynical exploitation, which amounts to parody, of Catholic traditions will no doubt receive approbation from, and even edify, a large public. By the crude censorship code which judges such performances, Maugham has written a devotional work. The Blessed Virgin appears in a blue and white dress, is young, and could be taken for a lady. The Inquisitor turns out to be a liberal humanitarian who could be himself condemned for heresy. On the other hand, anyone who might be embarrassed by Maugham's investigation of the doctrine of damnation is advised to renounce *Catalina's* blandishments.

JOHN FARRELLY

THEATRE: Man with a Problem

IT IS COMFORTING to realize that Tennessee Williams is not a writer of hits, but a writer with a problem. His problem rises from the conflict between the quality of his sensibility and the objective material of his plots.

In "Summer and Smoke" at the Music Box (written at about the same time as "A Streetcar Named Desire"), Williams appears torn between a character and a theme. The character is observed with delicate sympathy, but the theme—too consciously articulated without being mastered—disturbs both the characterization and the play's dramatic clarity. It remains nevertheless a play whose very faults are interesting.

Alma Winemiller, the daughter of a Mississippi minister and his insane wife, is a spiritually energetic girl in love with her lifelong neighbor, Dr. John Buchanan. The young doctor is attracted by the girl's idealism, but he expresses his tenderness toward her by a harsh insistence on its sexual aspects. Shocked, the girl tries to pit her idealism against the boy's boastful sinfulness. ("You're no gentleman!" she cries—and she is right.) Alma wins the "argument" only when John's father is killed in an accident brought about by John's soiled companions. Now redeemed from his carnal course, John does not turn to his savior Alma, but instead marries a buxom little female of coarser background. Alma, in turn, converted to the doctrine of the senses (reversing the pattern of ladies from Thaïs to Sadie Thompson), now seems prepared to indulge in casual affairs.

One of the springs of Williams' inspiration is his fascination with the opposition between the old Adam which tends to keep us mired in a kind of primitive inertia, and our impulse to transcend it. In "A Streetcar Named Desire" this fascination led him almost unconsciously to a social theme: the "animal" in that play is identified with the "ordinary" American. The naturalistic details of portraiture in "Streetcar" are so right that the audience accepts and enjoys them on their own terms whether or not they follow the author's ideological intention, which, to begin with, is intuitive rather than analytic. In

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"Summer and Smoke" so much time is given to a conscious exposition of theme that Williams loses the specific sense of his people and to a dangerous extent our concern as spectators.

The thematic base of "Summer and Smoke" is rendered ambiguous by being stated through characters that do not properly embody the forces the play is supposed to pit against each other. Is Alma Winemiller "sexually repressed" because of her overreliance on her spiritual nature? Not really, for she loves John Buchanan with an eagerness and a shyness that are both entirely normal in themselves. That she should be repelled by his crudity is also normal. That she should be presented as the champion of the "soul" and he as advocate for the "flesh" is a confusion that derives from the author's inability to know when he is creating character and when he is interfering with the characters by talking—sometimes a little foolishly—in their stead.

The ancient dispute about the polarity of body and soul is mostly a Puritan obsession and a consequence of the abuse of words induced by faulty religious education. Of the two characters in the play, the man, who rationalizes his promiscuity on intellectual grounds, is surely the more Puritan, one might even go so far as to say the more "repressed" and the less normal. His sexual activity does not strike one as a manifestation of natural exuberance but of moral defiance.

It would have been perfectly proper for Williams to present the situation in this light. In that case the play might have suggested that so many American men are Puritans in revolt against themselves that they drive their women to licentiousness. But perhaps a residue of Puritanism in the author prevented him from knowing this.

As a result the play alternates between psychoanalytic hints (never artistically convincing) and what becomes—aside from several fine passages which reveal his natural endowments as a poet-playwright—an almost trite and at moments badly constructed plot line. Fragments of true feeling have been attenuated and vitiated by the author's failure to find a proper form for them, to think his problem through.

It is the function of the director of a play as subtly difficult as "Summer and Smoke" to articulate a coherent interpretation which the audience can actually *see*. It is evident that such an interpretation never existed in regard to this play. The production, in fact, provides an example of how a group of talented people, when there is no firm hand to guide them, may contribute to a play wholeheartedly but without valid effect. As Alma Winemiller, Margaret Phillips, an actress of considerable quality and ability, has been permitted or encouraged by the director, Margo Jones, to overstress such secondary characteristics as a nervous laugh, an affected speech, super-refinement of manner, at the expense of the main motive of the character, which should be her innate womanly instincts. Tod Andrews as John Buchanan is earnest as well as handsome, but he has been given no real characterization.

Jo Mielziner's setting is not only as pretty as can be, but an honest attempt to capture the play's special style. The setting is none the less dramatically unsuccessful because it restricts the free movement essential to the play, and its stylization ends by being almost more confining to the imagination than a realistic set. What would be best would be practically no set at all. HAROLD CLURMAN

RADIO: Translating the Classics

THERE IS FLUTTERING among the "exquisites." These are the literary fops on radio's fringe who were thus characterized a few years ago by one of the medium's more solid critics, Robert J. Landry. He saw them writing of radio programs "from Olympus for the Olympians," setting the fashion with smiles at what they consider radio's "incurable illiteracy and vulgarity." Had Landry taken the time to visit the cloisters within the past week, he'd have noted that the dandies were not content with smiles. Within forty hours of each other, CBS and NBC had attempted dramatization of *Madame Bovary* and *An American Tragedy*. Such temerity called for guffaws on the part of the elite who could toss the challenge: "Is this Literature?"

The answer is that it was radio. That's what CBS' "Ford Theatre" tries to do Fridays at nine. NBC's "University Theatre" is devoted to the same cause (Sundays, 2:30-3:30 p.m.). Neither of the networks had set out to do a literal reading of Flaubert or Dreiser, but each was concerned with its author's content and intent, and with translating them into terms that would carry on the air waves.

Radio can be highbrow as all get-out—to see what I mean, listen some Sunday at 12:30 to CBS' "Invitation to Learning." Radio can also be poetic, set mood, define character, weave plot, play upon emotions. It can do all of these things and more. But show me a radio writer, or director, who attempts to do them all in one radio drama, and I'll show you an amateur or a fool. The people in charge of the pair of radio dramas under discussion were neither.

Fletcher Markle, who produces "Ford Theatre," and the man in charge of NBC's program, Andrew Love, know not only radio's potentialities but its limitations as well. Given the time for an uncut version of a classic, like those done over BBC's "Third Programme" and heard in New York last year over WNYC, a radio play can reproduce the author's literary flavor while at the same time projecting much of the original dramatic excitement. But that is true only when

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the original is written for the stage. Even then, some doctoring is necessary—the insertion of transitional narration, the articulate setting of scenes, the provision of music as background or "bridge," the use of sound, the employment of other devices which radio needs in fairness to the mass audience robbed of the sight, movement, color, costuming, lighting and other paraphernalia taken for granted in a play staged in a theatre before a limited few.

Even a good stage original needs a skillful adapter's technique when it is transferred to the radio. Erik Barnouw, who has done some of the adaptations for the "Theatre Guild on the Air" (ABC, Sundays, 9:30 p.m.), explained in the Guild's printed collection of plays why he had thought it necessary to take certain liberties with "The Silver Cord":

> In a stage play about a family [wrote Barnouw] it is almost inevitable that most of the action should take place in one room. All sorts of events that might more logically happen in a variety of settings are ingeniously, for the sake of economy and practical staging considerations, made to happen in one or two locales. But in radio, moving from one place to another is easy and costs nothing. Therefore it is possible, and often advisable, to unstitch the scenes as sewed together for the stage play and to stitch them together into a new pattern, more true to probability and more characteristic of the mobile radio medium.

The perfectionist who wants his stage play "pure" and his novel pristine when transferred to the air, is really indulging his snobbishness. *He* studied *Madame Bovary* in college (if not in his grandmother's attic) and discussed Dreiser's "massive ponderousness" in bull-sessions among self-confessed Young Intellectuals. How, then, can several million listeners tuned in on a coast-to-coast network appreciate such fine fare? Let the masses wallow in the coarseness of soap opera, the cheapness of whodunits, the tawdriness of radio comedy. These are to be denounced, indiscriminately. But Literature? That's too good for the people.

So those who hate the idea of others muscling in on their private fun find reasons for whipping radio drama when it is attempted by such programs as "Ford Theatre" or "University Theatre." If some of Flaubert's delicate delineation of character was missing from "Bovary"-on-the-air, Marlene Dietrich more than made up for this loss in literary flavor by her superb acting in the lead role. The production of *An American Tragedy* not only brought all of Dreiser's vast understanding to the listener, it also improved on his prose without losing any of his vigor. In both instances, the plays were directed in minor key, so that scenes famous for their turbulence came across powerfully but at the same time without tearing the microphone to tatters.

Miss Dietrich was fortunate in playing opposite Van Heflin (her lover) and Claude Rains (her husband). Too often, film stars rely on their screen reputations to cover slipshod work in radio; these people performed as artists who respected the medium as well as the vehicle.

George Montgomery played the lead in the *Tragedy,* with Lynn Allen as the factory girl and Clark Duney as the defense attorney. Montgomery, except in a few scenes, was not as true to Dreiser's character as this listener wished, but the two others were excellent.

The mounting of several of the scenes, particularly the drowning of the girl, and the trial, were superbly done. Top credit must go to the adapters—Emerson Crocker and Brainerd Duffield—for the radio version of *Madame Bovary,* and to Ernest Kinoy for the work on *An American Tragedy.*

One more point must be made about both productions. If you remember the novels, you know they offer room for much bowdlerization in accordance with the strictness of radio's many taboos. There were no unnecessary excisions on the air. There were circuitous routes, specially constructed for the radio broadcaster's nimble feet. But the radiomen got there just the same.

SAUL CARSON

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MOVIES: Things Are Looking Up

IN "THE RED SHOES," their new full-dress production for J. Arthur Rank, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger have created an entertainment that comes close to being perfect. It is amusing, beautiful, dazzling; it invades an area of enchantment with confident good humor and maintains its style of elegance with casual sureness.

The idea of "The Red Shoes" is the familiar one in which a theatre company experiences in real life a situation parallel to the fiction it is performing on the stage. In this case the company is a ballet group and the story is the Hans Andersen tale of the magic slippers that danced their little owner to her death.

Backstage life is titillating to the outsider, and the rumors of the ballet world—a kind of monastic order dominated by tantrums and champagne—is particularly alluring. Powell and Pressburger have set their piece to this mood of dedication and extravagance which, whether it is true or not, makes a wonderfully diverting script. The tone is maintained by Leonide Massine, who shows in this film that he is not only a great dancer but a comic strong enough to accent all the performances going on around him. As ballet master of the Lermontov Ballet, he plays a kind of autocratic gadfly with an effervescent love of mischief. Moira Shearer, as Vicki Page, the first dancer of the company and heroine of the story, is beautiful and appealing; she is either a fine dancer or else an actress so good that she makes you believe her one.

Anton Walbrook plays the tyrannical genius, Lermontov, with implacable charm, and succeeds in looking as though he really could hold the whip over his talented individualists. Marius Goring, as composer of the music for the "Red Shoes" ballet and as lover of Vicki, has the difficult task of playing straight man to a congress of butterflies and he looks rightly bewildered by the fluttering. Robert Helpmann (who also wrote the choreography), Ludmilla Tcherina, and a ballet company recruited for the film, dance and act the sparkling background.

Of necessity, "The Red Shoes" is in Technicolor and the producers have made a real virtue of it. They carry over into the dramatic scenes the cake-icing prettiness of the dance episodes, and they make their locales—London, Paris, the Riviera—shine like bright new color slides.

The climax of the film is the "Red Shoes" ballet itself. Its quality as dance is not something on which I am competent to judge, but it has a vigor and a scope that at least justify the fiction that it marks the culmination of a great company's history. It seemed to me a daring and imaginative camera expansion of the choreographer's traditional possibilities.

"The Red Shoes" runs for two hours and a quarter, a very long time, and it begins to lag after the ballet has been danced and the details of the "true life" parallel have still to be worked out. But this is a small fault to find with a captivating film.

The new picture from Italy, "Tragic Hunt," is a melodramatic framework for displaying a number of the vices now feeding on that battered country. Absentee ownership, gangsterism, black markets, fugitive Germans, vengeful ex-collaborators, the impoverishment of the peasants and the land mines still blocking their plows all play parts in a story of highway robbery, murder and the kidnaping of a bride on her wedding day. It is difficult, thus, for a foreigner to keep pace with the developments of a plot that to the Italians may have the personal impact of a "living newspaper."

Still, there are good things in the film that everyone can grasp. Primarily, there is the atmosphere of fantastic horror cunningly built and maintained by the director, Giuseppe de Santis. This mood is achieved most obviously by the device of having the hunted thieves cruise frantically over the bleak countryside in a beautifully equipped Red Cross ambulance. The sealed interior of their van becomes a claustrophobic madhouse as it careens along in its ever tightening net. The aura, though, rises more generally from the nightmare continuity of the film. Things happen too fast and too violently—people seem to spring out of the ground; in one case a whole trainload of jitterbugging vagrants materializes in an empty landscape. This is masterful directing and editing to secure a mood.

The camera work is raw and cold, as though it were shot in squally rain. This bleak, iron lighting is often seen now in films from Europe, and it has become a style at least in part because the companies there have neither the time to wait for good weather nor the money to create it at will. If they run into rain they make a rainy picture—for "Tragic Hunt" it was the weather they needed.

"The Saxon Charm" is a "vehicle" for Robert Montgomery, who has taken recently to riding around on his pictures. It is the story—from a recent successful novel—of a Broadway producer whose arrogant manipulation of his associates approached insanity and earned him the hatred of the entire theatrical community.

Almost anyone you care to stop in midtown Manhattan will make you a guess who this monster is supposed to be, and they will all admit between curses that their man is a genius at his particular game. The trouble with Montgomery's portrait is that, though it conveys the s.o.b. quality brilliantly, it gives no hint of talent. You keep feeling, therefore, that Montgomery really is just one corner ahead of the husky young men in white jackets.

Furthermore, the people he chooses for pushing around (Susan Hayward and John Payne) seem remarkably well-suited for the purpose, and the conflict never builds. "The Saxon Charm" adds up to a deal of characterization about nothing. ROBERT HATCH

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DANCE

Indian, Parisian, Russian

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS took a more cheerful turn with the arrival of Ram Gopal and his small company of Hindu dancers during the closing days of the Golden Anniversary dance festival at the New York City Center. There could be neither political nor artistic objection to Ram Gopal, as there had been to the Paris Opera Ballet, for he came under the sponsorship of the new Indian government, and he is one of the world's greatest dancers.

If the titles—such words as "Push-panjali" and "Alarippu"—were esoteric, the dances themselves were not. Some were drawn from temple rituals or based on Sanskrit lore; others were simple folk dances. All of them were easy to follow, and all were performed with a spirit of dedication and a technical virtuosity that are rarely combined in any field of art nowadays. The variety of steps, turns and figurations is at least as wide as that of Western ballet, and the integration of the movement with the accompanying music is far more perfect.

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of Ram Gopal's technique, and of that of his six associates, is their remarkable development of the arm and neck muscles. The sidewise movement of the head is, of course, a familiar trademark of Hindu dancing; the incredible flexibility of the arms and shoulders, which often seemed to be made of rubber, is like nothing we have seen before. While the dancing usually makes its point clearly enough by itself, the meaning is made doubly plain by an elaborate language of hand and finger gestures which point up the action almost as intelligibly as the words of an opera.

The arrival of Ram Gopal (whose brief appearance here ten years ago went almost unnoticed) has forced us to reassess our standards of Hindu dancing. His only important predecessor, Uday Shan-Kar, presented unique

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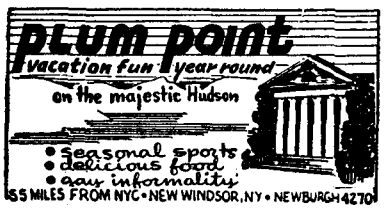
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little bijoux, in which he usually portrayed the character of the god Siva, using only small and carefully stylized movements. At the time, most of us took this to be classical Indian dancing, for we did not know that Shan-Kar had not originally been a dancer in India, but had learned his art in Europe, primarily from Anna Pavlova and Mary Wigman. His compositions were very beautiful, in their small way, but they were not much closer to classical Indian dancing than "Madame Butterfly" is to the Japanese No-plays. Ram Gopal has given us our first chance to learn the technical scope and dramatic power, the emotionalism and unabashed theatricalism of the dances which have remained almost unchanged for hundreds, and even thousands, of years.

The Paris Opera Ballet, which preceded Ram Gopal's company at the City Center, is also the possessor of an old and honorable tradition. But under Serge Lifar, whose convictions in art appear to be as pliable as they are in politics, the Opera Ballet has lost much of its dignity. Most of its repertory, of which Lifar is the chief choreographer, proved to be extremely flimsy. The public that had seen Martha Graham's "Deaths and Entrances" and Antony Tudor's "Pillar of Fire" was inevitably lukewarm to story-ballets in which the dancers merely postured when they ought to have been expressing some kind of dramatic emotion; and the spice and inventiveness of George Balanchine's classical choreography had left it cool to divertissements which merely repeat the stock-in-trade clichés of the Roxy and the Music Hall.

The technique of the company was competent, but it was not brilliant enough to compensate for the feeble material. Although Yvette Chauvire, the prima ballerina, dances with warmth and vigor, she has the bad habit, shared by all her colleagues, of stopping to milk the audience whenever there is a hint of applause. This vaudeville attitude came as a shock, for American artists have long since learned to keep the continuity of a piece, without interrupting it for bows and kisses.

By contrast, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, celebrating its tenth anniversary with a gala season at the Metropolitan Opera House, looked good. It actually was better than for some years past. The corps de ballet had been rehearsed to a higher point of precision than usual, some of the settings had been repainted, and a general air of zest and renewed self-confidence was apparent. With the addition of some first-class guest artists —Alicia Markova, Mia Slavenska, Anton Dolin and Agnes de Mille—to a roster that already included Alexandra Danilova, Frederic Franklin, Leon Danielian, Mary Ellen Moylan and Ruthanna Boris, the company for once had more than enough leading performers to bring distinction to the entire repertory.

Unfortunately, the management failed to do much about refurbishing this repertory, which stuck faithfully to "Giselle," "Les Sylphides," "Swan Lake," "Coppelia," "Scheherazade," "Gaîté Parisienne," and the like. Ruthanna Boris wrote the choreography for a cleanly designed but rather vaporous new ballet, financed by Houbigant perfume money, called "Quelques Fleurs," with stunning decors by young Robert Davison. "Seventh Symphony" and "Rouge et Noir," two ten-year-old "symphonic ballets," were exhumed. Both are by Leonide Massine, and both are horrors. And from Paris there arrived, as a special guest, a Spanish-born dancer, José Torres, whose smiling emptiness and fabulous lack of technique—both ballet and Spanish—made us wonder again just what has happened to Parisian taste.

CECIL SMITH

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CORRESPONDENCE

Congressional Poll

SIR: I am again glad to see your analysis of Congress which in past election years has been a great help to the cause of liberals. However, in this number (the *NR*, September 27) there occurs an omission which should be rectified. The list of Doubtful Senate Seats on page 22 lists Iowa as having no Progressive Party candidate for Senator. This is not true. The Iowa Progressive Party candidate for the Senate is Professor S. M. Pitcher of the Department of English in the State University.

Iowa City, Ia. L. A. WARE

Friend of Rankin

SIR: Representative John E. Rankin will continue to be elected to Congress as long as Northern liberals send money to such candidates as Claude Clayton. Clayton was Rankin's manager a few years ago, was elected judge by the Rankin crowd and has had power-trust support in his races. Clayton sent a last-minute letter to voters insulting all Democrats, howling for states'-rights race hatred, and, as soon as the election was over, introduced Rankin at Tupelo, Mississippi, with flattery.

Waynesboro, Tenn. R. L. H.

"Witch-Hunt in the Northwest"

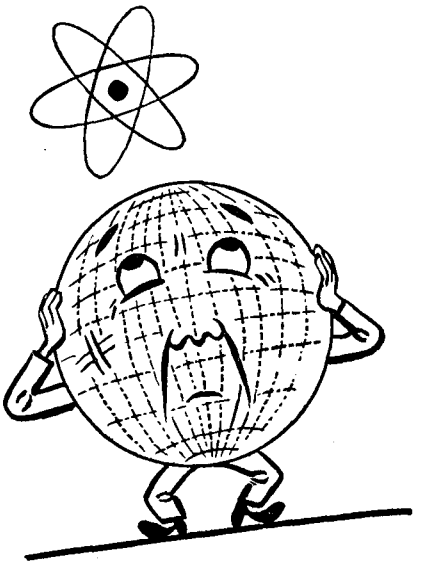
SIR: I am president of the local chapter of the American Association of University Professors, and was therefore much interested in your article, "Witch-Hunt in the Northwest," and the subsequent letter which you published (September 20) from Professor Hopkins of the University of Washington.

It is quite possible that Hopkins' qualifications to your article were in order. But it seems to me that the chief point is to congratulate you on your treatment of this important subject. An extremely dangerous situation confronts public higher education in this state. In no state has there been planned a more concentrated drive upon educational institutions at the instance of reactionary elements.

WILLIAM H. FISHER, Department of Education, Eastern Washington College of Education

Cheney, Wash.

TO THE READERS OF THE NEW REPUBLIC



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